THE

Complete ART OF POETRY.

In Six PARTS.

I. Of the Nature, Uſe, Excellence, Riſe and Progreſs of Poetry, *&c.*

II. Of the Uſe and Neceſſity of Rules in Poetry.

III. Of the Manner, Rules, and Art of Compoſing Epigrams, Paſtorals, Odes, *&c.*

IV. Of Tragedy and Comedy; how to draw the Plot, and form the Characters of both.

V. The Rules of the Epic or Narrative Poem. Of the Poetic Diction or Language, and of *Engliſh* Numbers.

VI. A Collection of the moſt beautiful Deſcriptions, Similes, Alluſions, *&c.* from *Spenſer*, and our beſt *Engliſh* Poets, as well Ancient as Modern, with above Ten Thouſand Verſes, not to be found in any Performance of this Kind. *Shakeſpeariana*; or the moſt beautiful Topicks, Deſcriptions, and Similes that occur throughout all *Shakeſpear*'s Plays.

By CHARLES GILDON, Gent.

Why is He honour'd with a Poet's Name,
Who neither knows, nor wou'd obſerve a Rule?
Roſcom.

VOLUME. I.

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COMPLETE ART

OF

POETRY

TO THE

Moſt Excellent Majeſty

OF

GEORGE,

King of *Great-Britain*, *France* and *Ireland*, Defender of the Faith, Elector of *Brunſwick*, *Lunenburg*, &c.

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

THESE *Poetical Inſtitutions* being now to viſit the *Public*, I could not but think their beſt Security would be to appear under the auſpicious Pro-

tection of your Majeſty's moſt auguſt and ſacred Name; a Patronage to which I think I have ſome Right, as being the earlieſt, greateſt, longeſt and at this Time I believe the only Sufferer in your Majeſty's Dominions, for an unbyaſs'd Zeal for the Security of the Succeſſion of the Houſe of *Hanover*.

But if that Plea be too weak, of too little Efficacy even with your Majeſty; yet theſe *Inſtitutions* bring a Claim of their own, which is, that as they teach the moſt noble, moſt antient, and moſt uſeful of all Arts, as that is ſo nearly concern'd in the forming the Manners, and refining the Spirit of your People, the Father of

of his People cannot refuſe his Smiles, and ſuch Marks of his Favour, as may encourage great Genius's to apply themſelves to it, and rival Antiquity; to do which, a Royal Patron is only wanting.

The Flouriſhing of Arts and Sciences is no leſs a Proof of the Glory of a great Prince and happy People, than the flouriſhing of Arms: The firſt is indeed a greater, as the Ornaments and Benefits of Peace are more deſirable than thoſe of War. A Nation in Peace, is in the State of Health; a Nation in War, is in a Courſe of Phyſic, which, tho' neceſſary to purge and carry off the groſs and noxious

Humours contracted in that State of Health, yet certainly none will think it preferable to the former. Upon theſe Grounds, and ſupported by theſe Reaſons, I lay this antient Mother of all Arts and Sciences, of all Moral and Political Knowledge at your Majeſty's Feet, imploring your Protection both of that, and of,

Your MAJESTY'S,

moſt Humble and

Obedient Subject,

and Servant,

CHARLES GILDON.

THE PREFACE.

I ſhall not trouble the Reader with any long Diſcourſe before the following Sheets, thinking it ſufficient to inform him of the Cauſe of my Writing them, the Method I have follow'd, and the Authors I have conſulted in this Undertaking.

The Love, Value and Honour I have always had for an Art ſo *antient*, ſo *illuſtrious*, and ſo *uſeful*, as that of POETRY, furniſh'd the Motive to my Labour. For I had long ſeen with Regret the *Aſſurance* of *Pretenders* to it, and the Abuſes that from almoſt a total *Ignorance* of it, had brought it into a neglect with *moſt*, and into a Contempt with *Many*, while the *Engliſh* World, that knew little of the *Antients*, judged of the

Excellence of *Poetry* by the rude Draughts of the general *Scriblers* of the Age, and finding nothing great, nothing wonderful in theſe, unjuſtly conclude that the *Art* it ſelf is but a meer Trifle below a ſerious Thought, which has drawn Diſſuaſives from our Study of it, from ſo great and judicious a Perſon as Mr. *Lock* in his Diſcourſe of *Education*. So different was his Opinion from that of *Petronius Arbiter*, who adviſes all thoſe who intend to apply their Minds to any thing great, to employ their firſt Approaches to Letters in the Study of Verſe. But Mr. *Lock* chiefly conſidering the Education of an *Engliſh* Gentleman, juſtly ſuppos'd, that his Pupils Application to Poetical Writers, would ſcarce ever light up that Fire, which ſhould warm the Heart to great Actions, and the embracing of Virtues uſeful to the *Public*.

But if Mr. Lock had been to write of this Art, and conſider'd it as it was handed down to us from *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Pindar*, *Horace*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and the like, he would with *Milton*, as great a Man as himſelf in all kind of Literature, have recommended the Poets to the Study of his Pupil, as that admirable Poet does in his Diſcourſe of Education to Mr. *Hartlib*; but *Milton's* Notion of Poetry, was not what will fit

our

our common Authors, as will be plain from his Words, which I ſhall quote before I have done this Preface.

To remove therefore this Ignorance of our Writers and Readers of *Poeſy*, which has debas'd the Honour of this Mother of all Learning, was the Cauſe of my Undertaking, by giving our *Engliſh* World thoſe Rules, by the Obſervation of which, *Homer*, *Virgil*, and the reſt of the Antients gain'd immortal Reputation.

On the other ſide, I knew very well that it was a Matter of no ſmall difficulty to reaſon People out of Follies eſtabliſh'd by Cuſtom; and that the general Run of a noiſy Party, was againſt all Inſtructions in this Kind, which they branded with the unpopular Name of *Criticiſm*, which by the Ignorant Writers in Vogue, has been miſrepreſented as an *ill-natur'd* Thing; and that too many Learned Men in ſeveral Languages, by a jejune way of handling this *Art*, had incumber'd its Maxims with Abundance of hard Terms, which not being obvious to to every Reader, render'd their Diſcoveries however valuable, not ſo inviting as to engage the Peruſal of thoſe who ſtood moſt in need of them.

Monſieur *Fontennelle*'s Book of the Plurality of Worlds, ſo much prais'd by Sir *William Temple*

Temple in his Eſſays, and plac'd by him in the next Form to the Antients, made me think of another Method than had hitherto generally been follow'd by the Critical Writers. For he has brought the three Syſtems of Aſtronomy by a pleaſing and familiar Dreſs to the Capacity of a Lady, who had not any Learning, and nothing but good Senſe to direct her.

I have endeavor'd in the following Sheets, to come as near his Method as the Difference of my Subject from his would bear; where I was upon Generals, as the defence of *Poetry*, and the neceſſity of the *Rules*, I hope I have ſhown this; but being in other Parts oblig'd to ſpeak of the *particular Rules* of every ſort of Poetry, all I could do was to deliver them as plainly, and as diſencumber'd from Terms of Art as I poſſibly cou'd, and I think through the whole I have made uſe of no Word which is not familiar to every Capacity, that knows any thing of the World. In the laſt Dialogue indeed, where I was oblig'd to ſpeak of the ſeveral Poetical Feet of the *Greek* and *Latin* Verſe, there was no avoiding putting their proper Names, but I have taken care ſo to explain them, that every one may be Maſter of what I advance.

I am

The PREFACE.

I am far from aiming to impoſe what I deliver as all my own. I write the *Complete Art of Poetry*, and therefore am under a neceſſity to give the Rules convey'd down to us, which have been eſtabliſh'd theſe two Thouſand Years and upwards. All I pretend to, is, that I hope I have done this in a plain and eaſy Manner, ſo as not to tire my Reader, and yet give him a full Inſtruction in the Art. And this leads me to the Authors I have conſulted. Whatever I found of uſe to my Deſign in *Ariſtotle* (chiefly) in *Horace*, *Dionyſius* of *Halicarnaſſus*, *Boileau*, *Rapin*, *Dacier*, *Gerard Voſſius*'s Poetical Inſtitutions, the late Duke of *Buckingham*'s *Rehearſal*, Mr. *Rimer*, the preſent Duke of *Buckinghamſhire*'s moſt excellent *Eſſay on Poetry*, Mr. *Dennis*, or any other I have made bold with; ſo that my Reader will have the Satisfaction of great and illuſtrious Inſtructors, when he peruſes my Book.

Having gone through the three Heads propoſed by me for this Preface, I find I am oblig'd to add ſomething more on Account of another Book in our Tongue, which at firſt View may ſeem to be of the ſame Nature, and that is Mr. *Byſshe*'s Art of *Engliſh Poetry*, with a Collection, *&c.* But I had no Thoughts of interfering with him, and indeed I do not; we propoſe quite different

Ends,

Ends, and therefore have purſued quite different Methods. He (tho' he calls his Book the Art of *Engliſh Poetry*) aims only at giving Rules for the *Structure* of an *Engliſh* Verſe, at Rime, and the like. And thus in his Collection, he aims at ſettling a ſort of Dictionary of Epithets and Synonymous Words, which he tells us is the End of his Collection. But the Deſign of my Collection, is to give the Reader the great *Images* that are to be found in thoſe of our Poets, who are truly great, as well as their Topics and Moral Reflections. And for this Reaſon I have been pretty large in my Quotations from *Spenſer*, whom he has rejected, and have gone through *Shakeſpear*, whom he ſeems willing to exclude, being ſatisfy'd that the Charms of theſe two great Poets are too ſtrong not to touch the Soul of any one who has a true Genius for Poetry, and by Conſequence enlarge that Imagination which is ſo very neceſſary for all Poetical Performances. And ſince *Milton* and *Waller* were made Poets by *Spenſer*, I do ſuppoſe the ſame Cauſe may in all Probability have the ſame Effect When I ſay that *Spenſer* made thoſe two great Men *Poets*, I only mean that the true Ethereal Fire that they found in him, rous'd that Genius, which each of them had by Nature, into Act.

If

If in this Collection any of the ſame Verſes ſhould happen to be found, it is not becauſe they were in Mr. *Byſshe's*, but becauſe they were found in the Poets as I read them, and as free for me to quote as for him. 'Tis plain I follow him not, when of all his Liſt of Names I have ſcarce medled with above four.

This Gentleman indeed, and I are of quite a different Opinion of Poetry, he tells us in his Preface. *For upon the whole Matter* (ſays he) *it was not my Buſineſs to judge any further, than on the Vigour and Force of Thought, of the Purity of the Language, of the Aptneſs and Propriety of Expreſſion, and above all of the Beauty of* Colouring, *in which the Poet's Art chiefly conſiſts*——

But I have in the Body of the Book prov'd that the *Poet's Art* does not chiefly conſiſt in the *Colouring*, any more than that of the Painter, but in the Deſign. Which puts me in Mind of a Repartee of *Michael Angelo*, on *Titian*, who ſeeing the Pieces of the former, ſaid he would be an excellent Painter if he underſtood *Colouring*: And *Titian* reply'd, the other would be a very good Painter if he underſtood *Deſigning*.

I will not oppoſe to him *Ariſtotle*, *Horace*, *Boſſu*, *Dacier*, and other great Men among the Antients and Moderns, leſt he ſhould except

cept againſt them. I will only quote Mr. *Dryden*, and Mr. *Milton*, and ſure theſe, whom he himſelf has with ſo much Juſtice made *Engliſh* Claſſics, will be admitted as undoubted Judges.

Mr. *Dryden* in his Preface to his Fables, the laſt and perhaps the beſt of his Works, has theſe Words, —— Mr. *Hobbs*, *I ſay*, *begins the Praiſe of* Homer, *where he ſhould have ended it. He tells us that the firſt Beauty of an* Epic Poem *conſiſts in* Diction, *that is in the Choice of* Words, *and Harmony of* Numbers; *now the* Words *are the* Colouring *of the* Work, *which in the Order of* Nature *is the* laſt *to be conſider'd. The* DESIGN, *the* DISPOSITION *the* Manners, *and the* Thoughts *are all before it. Where* any *of theſe are wanting or imperfect, ſo much it wants, and is imperfect in the* Imitation *of Human Life, which is the very Definition of a Poem. Words indeed like* glaring Colours, *are the firſt Beauties that ariſe, and ſtrike the* Sight; *but if the* DRAUGHT *be* falſe *or* lame, *the* FIGURES *ill diſpos'd, the* MANNERS obſcure *or* inconſiſtent; *or the* Thoughts unnatural, *the fineſt* Colours *are but daubing, and the Piece is a beautifull Monſter at beſt.*

Thus far Mr. *Dryden*, who plainly puts the *Colouring* in the laſt Place, and ſo does not

not make it that which our Author does, that in which the *Poet's Art does* chiefly *conſiſt*, nay he is ſo far from placing it as the chief Aim and Art of the Poet, that he makes it by far the leaſt conſiderable.

Let us now hear what *Milton* ſays to this Purpoſe in his Diſcourſe on Education to Mr. *Hartlib*. *I mean not here* (ſays he) *the* Proſody *of a Verſe*, (which is all that this Author's Art of *Engliſh* Poetry extends to) which they could not but have met with before among the RUDIMENTS *of* Grammar, *but the* ſublime Art, *which in* Ariſtotle's Poetics, Horace, *and the* Italian *Commentaries of* Caſtelvetro, Taſſo, Mazzoni *and others, teaches what the Laws are of a true* Epic Poem, *what of a* Dramatic, *what of a* Lyric: *What* Decorum, *which is the grand Maſterpiece to obſerve. This would make them ſoon perceive what* deſpicable *Creatures our* common Rimers, *and Play-Writers be; and ſhow them what Religious, what Glorious and Magnificent Uſe might be made of Poetry, both in Divine and Human Things.*

Our Opinions and Aims being ſo very different, it is no wonder that we purſu'd different Methods. And this is ſufficient to clear me from interfering with this Gentleman in his Undertaking.

If

The PREFACE.

If in the following Book I have oppos'd any other Author, I hope I have always done it with good Manners, and no Man of Candour will take it amiss, that his Opinion if ill grounded be fairly confuted.

I hope the Candid Reader will excuse several Errors of the Press, and those of the Author, which may be imputed to the Writing this Book during a long Fit of Sickness. I need not tell the World, that by *Crites* I mean Mr. *Dennis*, his Excellence in Criticism as well as Poetry being so well known.

Among many Errors of the Press, I must take Notice of one, where *Grotius* is printed for *Grævius.*

THE INTRODUCTION.

CRITES,

YOUR Letters have of late been full of Complaints, that you can never find me at Home; and that you every Day miss me at our usual Place of Rendezvous. I must plead Guilty to the Indictment; the Fact is too evident against me: For I have been for some time as much estranged from my own Lodgings, as from our common Retreat, where we so frequently, with no vulgar Pleasure, offer our moderate Libations to *Bacchus*, amidst our more plentiful Sacrifices to *Apollo*. But then I flatter myself with a Pardon from *Crites*, since his allowd Merit Secures him from Neglect, and his good Opinion of my Understanding will not permit him to think me so unmindful of my own Improvement and Satisfaction, as wilfully to omit any Opportunity in my Power, of cultivating a Converse with *Crites*, which every Man of Sense endeavours to do out of Inclination and Self-Love rightly understood.

But that you may not look on this as a Compliment of the Times, and a lame Excuse for what I want sufficient Reasons to justify; I, in this publick Manner, send you a full Account of the Occasion of this my long Absence; and the more willingly, be-

cauſe I fancy it has produc'd ſomething worthy of your Conſideration, and meritorious of your moſt candid Cenſure. I have, in this time, in the moſt agreeable Converſation in the World, run thro' the whole Syſtem of Poetical Criticiſm, in a Manner that muſt render the Obſervations and Rules of Poetry far more acceptable to the general Reader, than the Maxims of an Art, which, in their uſual dry, and jejune Dreſs, have been hitherto ſo little reliſhed by the Town. I know, your old Acquaintance, Mſr. *Rapin*, ſeems to confeſs ſome Warmth (not to call it Anger) that the Ladies in *France* have aſſum'd to themſelves a Power and Authority of Deciding the Fate of Tragedy, in that Nation. But this Heat of his ſeems to be the Effect of his Suſpicion, that the *French* Ladies are not qualify'd Judges of a Performance of that high Nature, on which, perhaps, he wou'd only allow the ſworn Judges of the polite *Athenians* fairly to determine. But, *Crites*, the Ladies I ſhall produce in the following Dialogues, are not ſuch as generally fill the Boxes, and condemn and applaud meerly by Caprice, but ſuch as are equal to the Cauſe before them, and who appeal to Reaſon and Nature, in all their important Deciſions; and ſuch, I perſwade my ſelf, that Mſr. *Rapin* wou'd not think liable to his Reſentments.

The familiar and intelligible Manner in which, by theſe Means, Criticiſm has, at laſt, had the good Fortune to be treated, I am confident, will not be diſagreeable to you, who confeſs ſo generous a Deſire, that a good Judgment, and fine Taſte ſhould ſpread among all thoſe who will be meddling in Poetry, either as Readers, Hearers, or Performers.

You have often heard me ſpeak of my *Weſtminſter* Friend, with ſuch Raptures as his Merits will always juſtify in all thoſe who have the Happineſs to be admitted to a Freedom of Converſation with him, as you ſhall your ſelf judge, now thoſe troubleſome Avocations of Buſineſs, which ſo many Months ra-

with'

viſh'd him from the Company of the Muſes, are at an End.

It has been this Friend of mine, who has been your Rival all this while. I had a great deal of Time to get up after ſo tedious a Receſs; and ſuch a Chain of entertaining Diſcourſes interven'd, that I cou'd not think of miſſing any one of them, till the whole Subject was exhauſted. But before I introduce you into this Aſſembly, I think I ought to let you know the Characters of the chief, at leaſt, of thoſe who compoſe it.

I ſhall begin with the principal: This extraordinary Friend of mine, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the Name of *Laudon*, that the cenſorious, ill-natur'd, and envious Part of the Town, the Little-wits, the Verſifiers, and Pretenders, may not accuſe me of ſacrificing more to Flattery, than to Deſert. This Name does indeed include his own, which really ſignifying the *Hill*, or *Mountain of Praiſe*, I have compounded this of two old *Engliſh* Words, which have the very ſame Meaning: That is, *Laud*, *Praiſe*; and *Don*, *Down*, or *Hill*.

Laudon has indeed ow'd to Chance, a Name, which expreſſes thoſe Excellencies that Nature has beſtow'd upon him; For even in his Youth, he has won ſo much juſt Praiſe to himſelf, by his fine Parts, Application, and Largeneſs of Soul, that it is ſcarce a Metaphor to call it a *Mountain*, and ſuch a *Mountain*, as with *Olympus* of old, reaches up to the very Skies themſelves.

The Perſon of *Laudon* is extremely graceful, and his Addreſs engages the Heart before the Force of his Reaſon, the Penetration of his Judgment, and the Brillant of his Wit can appear from his Diſcourſe: But when once thoſe exert themſelves in their native Vigour, you muſt be the moſt inexcuſably obſtinate Creature in the World, not to be of his Opinion. But if he chance at any time to deviate a little

little in a Point, which he has not throughly conſi-der'd (which is extreamly ſeldom) no Man, who is Maſter of ſuch Abilities to defend an Error, is ſo lit-le tenacious of it; for the Pleaſure of being rightly informed in any Particular, takes away all Regret of yielding himſelf vanquiſh'd by the Reaſons of his Opponent.

His Temper is neither profuſe, nor penurious; he ſteers moſt judiciouſly between thoſe two Shelves of Reputation, in the middle Stream of a juſt Generoſi-ty. He firſt chuſes an Object worthy of the Benefit, and then he never forſakes it: Whereas moſt of our great Men that are called *Patrons*, do by thoſe who ſhelter themſelves, or their Works under their Names, as Men do with Street Beggars, when they give an Alms: For as they never ſaw them before, ſo they never think of them afterwards. They are indeed a Sort of Quacks in Liberality; they never make a Cure of the Wounds and Maladies of Fortune, but think they do enough, by a poor palliating Medi-cine, to put off the evil Day, and remove the Pains for a while; but they return ſoon after with greater Force on the miſerable Patient. *Laudon*, on the con-trary, when he has once thought a Perſon worthy of his Bounty, believes him entailed on his Care, till the Cure be perfected.

This is enough to let you ſee how valuable a Per-ſon *Laudon* is; and I ſhall reſerve a more perfect Character of him to another Time and Place: For of *Laudon* the World is like to hear of me as long as Pro-vidence ſhall allow me Life, Health, and Vigour.

This Gentleman has the good Fortune (if I may call the Effect of his Judgment by ſuch a Name) to be married to a young Lady worthy of ſuch a Husband.

There is nothing requires a more delicate Hand, than the Character of a Lady. It is not every Pain-ter's Talent to draw the Pictures of that Sex: For tho' a Painter may diſcover himſelf a great Artiſt in the

Por-

Portraicts of Men, yet he muſt be a *Zeuxis*, *Antimachus*, *Nicias*, or a *Dahl*, to touch the ſoft Graces of the fair Sex. I own my Inability; and ſhould I attempt it, it would be but a haſty Sketch of a firſt Sitting, and very much to the Prejudice of the Original.

Cicero tells us, that could we ſee the Perſon of *Wiſdom* with our Eyes, ſhe would raiſe in us wonderful Deſires; but in *Moriſina* (the Lady under our Conſideration) you ſee the perfect Image of *Modeſty*, the Characteriſtick of Womanhood: So that whilſt her Charms excite our Admiration, her Modeſty awes our Deſires, and gives us a Sort of Taſte of a celeſtial Converſation, where the Beauty of the Objects ſhall tranſport us, and yet never be injurious to Innocence and Vertue. If ſhe be not talkative, it is not, that ſhe ever fails of pleaſing, when ſhe ſpeaks; but that Diffidence, which is always the Companion of good Senſe, confines her admirable Notions to her own Mind, which utter'd, wou'd improve the Hearers. In ſhort, let *Moriſina* ſpeak for her ſelf; and if there be any Defect in what I thus convey to you, aſſure your ſelf, it is mine, and not the Lady's.

About a Month ago, I went to dine with *Laudon*; but tho' I came when Dinner was near over, yet, to my Satisfaction, I found ſuch Company, as few Tables now-a-days can furniſh. There I found *Euſebia*, a Lady of exemplary Life, and who is not aſham'd of being religious even in ſo abandoned an Age; nor thinks it any Scandal to her Underſtanding, to be out of the Mode, when Vanity, Lightneſs, or Vice, are in Faſhion, or any thing that carries the Face and Appearance of either of them. She is not above Six and Twenty; and tho' ſhe has read much, and has a fine Collection of Books, yet ſhall you not find either a Novel, or Romance among them.

Madam *La Mode* came in, whilſt I was there the ſecond Day. This Lady, I confeſs, is liable to Cenſure, on Account of her Affectation; but yet that

cannot extinguiſh her Merit. She has Wit, ſhe has Youth, ſhe has Beauty, ſhe is Gay, and gives into all the harmleſs Gallantry of the Age; by this Means her Acquaintance is large, and by Conſequence not extreamly well choſen. But, *Crites*, it is no Wonder to find a young Lady carry'd away with the Opinion of the Town in Matters of Wit and Poetry; ſince we meet with ſome of our greateſt Dons, and mighty Pretenders to Judgment in thoſe Matters, as entire Slaves to *Vogue*, as this young Lady, notwithſtanding thoſe Helps of a Maſculine Education, which the Women have not the Happineſs to be admitted to.

Madam *La Mode* is therefore a Lady, who always profeſſes herſelf an admirer of every Play, Song or Poem that happens to take with the Town, be it good or bad; and as freely declares her utmoſt Contempt of whatever in that kind does not meet with vulgar Succeſs.

Iſſachar La Mode is her Husband, and always with her in all her Viſits and other Promenades. He is a Perſon who has no Excuſe for labouring under the ſame falſe Sentiment, but that the Fondneſs of a Husband makes him doat ſo on his Wife, as to be tranſported with every Thing that pleaſes her. When ever ſhe praiſes a Poem, he finds a Thouſand Beauties in it, that no Body elſe cou'd ever diſcover, and the Vanity of the Author himſelf cou'd not aſpire to. Yet has he had an Univerſity Education; has not only read the Antients, but repeats perpetually (out of his Lady's Company) *Virgil* and *Horace*. But the ſame is the Fate of ſeveral of our Acquaintance, who may juſtly be plac'd in the Number of the Ignorant, though they are perfect Maſters of both the *Greek* and the *Latin*; for they have not ſo natural a Plea for their ill Taſte, as our worthy *Iſſachar La Mode*.

The

The ſame Day came in *Tyro*, a young Poet, who has not been many Years from *Cambridge*. Till this Converſation, he was like the reſt of our Town Wits, a meer *Rimeſter*, or at moſt, a good *Verſifyer*. Smoothneſs of Verſe is now become ſo common, that it loſes the Name of a diſtinguiſhing Perfection; for 'tis a difficult Matter to find an Ear ſo unharmonious, as not to fall into Sounds that flow into eaſie Numbers. And yet this is a Quality that gives the glorious Name of Poets to Fellows without Warmth, without Judgment, without Imagination. But *Tyro*, before he left us, was ſatisfy'd that there was ſomething elſe required to that Character, much beyond ſo worthleſs an Accompliſhment, if I may give it that Title.

I ſhall only take Notice of one Character more, and that is of *Manilia*. She is a Woman of a great deal of Fire, Fancy and Life; and as ſhe has an Inclination to the Muſes, ſo ſhe has, in her Performances, no ſmall Force of unaſſiſted Nature. For as ſhe is thoroughly acquainted with no Language but her own, ſo ſhe has never thought of the Duties and Guides of Judgment in her Poetical Eſſays. Yet being Miſtreſs of a large Share of good Senſe and Reaſon, ſhe was eaſily convinc'd that ſhe had known but half the Qualities of a juſt Poet.

Theſe were moſt of our Company, and of their Sentiments you muſt expect your coming Entertainment to be compos'd.

As ſoon as *Laudon* ſaw me enter the Room, he cry'd out, *Gamaliel*, I am glad you are come, to put an End to theſe Melancholy Narrations, we have had of Plots, Conſpiracies, and Invaſions. Come, Ladies, no more of your Political News; this Gentleman will bring us ſomething more pacifick and agreeable from the Republick of Letters. What new Songs, new Satires, or new Plays have the Muſes beſtow'd upon us of late. For Buſineſs has made me

ſuch a Truant to theſe Affairs, that I am an utter Stranger to all thoſe entertaining Novelties, of which this Town is generally ſo fertile.

Hold, Sir, (ſaid I) give me leave to appeaſe the loud Call of Nature for Repletion, before you cram me with Queſtions which require a quiet Appetite to anſwer with any tolerable Satisfaction.

So fitting down, and having ſufficiently appeas'd the Importunity of my Stomach, and refreſh'd my ſelf with a Glaſs or two of generous Wine, *Laudon* renewing his Demands.

Why truly (ſaid I) the abundance of News, in State Affairs, has made it very ſcarce in *Parnaſſus*; the Mountains of *Scotland* have engroſs'd the Talk of the Town, and the Pens of the Writers ſo much, that the forked Hill of *Greece* is almoſt as ſilent as the Oracles, and the Poets may now ſay what *Dryden* did ſome Years ago.

The Pamphleteers their Venom daily ſpit,
They thrive by Treaſon, and we ſtarve by Wit.

Diviſion and Party is now ſo much the Genius of the Age, that it has thruſt it ſelf into the very Dominions of *Helicon*; and old *Homer*, who after his Death was the Cauſe of Strife to ſeven Cities, for the Honour of his Nativity; is now ſo between two Gentlemen, who contend for the Maſtery in the tranſlating of him. One of them has only (to the Regret of good Judges) given us the firſt Book of the *Iliads*; the other, the firſt four adorn'd with Pictures and fine Notes. If the latter has not done the blind Bard Juſtice, it has not been for want of Encouragement, ſince he has had more ſubſcrib'd to him for the Tranſlation, than we can diſcover the Author ever got by the Original; if at leaſt it be true, that *Homer* was in thoſe low and narrow Circumſtances, when he writ his admirable Poems.

For

For my Part (ſaid *Laudon*) I can never believe, that ſuch a Spirit, ſuch Fire, a Deſign ſo judiciouſly weigh'd, and ſo perfect, cou'd be produced in ſo miſerable a Fortune, as the Traditionary Writers of his Life have given him: For Poverty damps the generous Fire of Poetry, as well as that of Love. They are both the Off-ſpring of Affluence and Eaſe; nor can I conceive how a Man, whoſe Thoughts muſt be employ'd in a ſollicitous Care of Subſiſtance, cou'd ever be free enough to be filled with ſuch large and wonderful Ideas, as are able to beget a Pleaſure ſo tranſporting in all who read him; for Pain was never yet the Mother of a Child ſo agreeable. It ſeems not indeed poſſible that ſuch vaſt Acquiſitions of Knowledge in Philoſophy, Policy, Martial Diſcipline, Theology, and all the other Arts, which require the whole Time and Application of the brighteſt Underſtanding and Capacity to obtain, cou'd be arrived at by *Homer*, amidſt the anxious and neceſſary Avocations of a neceſſitous Fortune. I rather think that he was either born to a plentiful, or at leaſt an eaſie Paternal Eſtate; or that by his *Margites*, his *Battle of the Frogs*, his *Hymns*, or what other Primary Eſſays he made, he found ſufficient Reward to enable him to undertake his *Iliads* and *Odyſſeis*. For the *Greek* Nation were never ſo ſtupid, ſo little refined, as to ſuffer ſuch Merit to remain in that Want, as the Writers of the Life of this Poet would leave him in to his Death. Nor is it likely that ſo delicate a People, as gave ſuch commanding Force to the firſt rude Appearances of *Poetry* in *Orpheus*, among the uncultivate *Thracians*, and *Amphion* among the groſſeſt and leaſt elevated Regions of *Greece*, ſhou'd be ſo inſenſible themſelves of the Divine Excellencies in a preſent Poet. For it is, I Fancy, evident to common Reaſon, that Learning was not in its Infancy in *Homer*'s Time, as had we not loſt Six hundred thouſand Volumes in the *Ptolomaic* Library,

might

might doubtleſs be made appear. And I think Sir *William Temple*'s Conjectures on this Head, in his firſt Eſſay, are very well grounded; unleſs we will ſuppoſe *Homer* to have been divinely inſpired with Knowledge in an Age of Univerſal Ignorance. Can we ſuppoſe that the very repeating the Verſes of *Euripides*, cou'd ſave ſo many of the *Athenians* Lives, after the Rout of *Nicias*; and the ſame Verſes of the ſame Poet, deliver *Athens* it ſelf from Deſtruction, when taken by *Lyſander*; and that the more excellent Verſes of *Homer*, wanted Power with the ſame Nation or Race of People, to get him an Eaſineſs and Tranquility of Fortune? The Genius and Taſte of the People, forbid thoſe falſe Imaginations, however juſtify'd by the Obſcurity of Time, and our Ignorance of the Fact. But not to inſiſt on an Opinion, in which all Tradition is againſt me: Pray, How ſtands the preſent Controverſy?

Why Faith (anſwered I) the Controverſy as yet remains undecided: *Will*'s *Coffee-Houſe* gives it to the four Books, *Button*'s to the one. For my part (who am a Perſon indifferent, and a Retainer to neither of thoſe Reſorts of the *Eſprits*) I muſt ſay this of Mr. *Tickell*, that he ſeems to have enter'd into the Soul of *Homer*: You are ſure, at leaſt, of having ſome Taſte of the Genius and Manner of the Poet, when you read his Verſion; for there ſeems to me to be a Maſculine Strength, both in his Expreſſion and Numbers, and the Native Simplicity of that Old Father of Verſe, is not embarraſs'd with any Modern Turns and Embelliſhing Softneſſes. Mr. *Pope* has indeed all the Softneſs and Harmony of the *Lydian* Meaſures, as I may call them; but whether he comes up to the Majeſty, and Variety of his Author, I dare not determine.

It is not indeed to be ſuppoſed, that any Modern Tongue can come up to that of *Greece*, the moſt harmonious, and fitteſt for Verſe of any that ever was in

in the World; but I know, that a Maſter of the Engliſh Numbers is capable of giving a wonderful Variety of Cadence, of which a vulgar ſmooth Verſifyer has not the leaſt Knowledge. No Body ever denied, but that *Claudian*'s Verſe were numerous, and flow'd ſweetly enough, but every School Boy almoſt knows, that the perpetual Identity of Cadence, in that Author, breeds a Satiety, which is never found in *Virgil*. *Dryden*, who was the greateſt Maſter of *Engliſh* Verſification we have yet known, was perfectly acquainted with the agreeable Secret of diverſifying his Numbers. I can't help obſerving, That ſome of the zealous Partizans of the ſubſcrib'd Tranſlation, expreſs a mighty Aſtoniſhment at the Notes it is ſet out with; but alas! That is only the Labour of the Hand, a meer Tranſcript from Authors who have gone before, and give not the leaſt Addition to the Merit of the Tranſlation.

But leaving the Diviſion of the Merits of the Cauſe, to thoſe two Sovereign Tribunals of *Will*'s and *Button*'s, I ſhall only obſerve, That Mr. *Bay*'s Rule of Expectation was throughly employed, and every one came into the Subſcription, in full Aſſurance that this Expectation wou'd be as fully anſwer'd.

That Rule of Mr. *Bay*'s (ſaid *Landon*) has generally produc'd the contrary Effect in me as to Men, as well as Poems; for I have moſt commonly found ſo vaſt a Difference between the promiſed Excellence, and the real Defect, that two Contraries cou'd not be more oppoſite: Nay, this Rule has been infinitely diſadvantageous to them, by raiſing Expectation to the Height, and not ſupplying ſo much as *Ixion*'s Cloud to our eager Purſuits.

Who that has read *Grimald*'s Tracts, wou'd not imagine, That we had a Second *Cato* amongſt us; and that Publick Spirit had ſurviv'd all the Attacks of the growing Avarice of theſe later Ages. But

come

come close to him, and you find, a poor, narrow Soul'd selfish Creature; a mean Pursuer of little Byends; a Prodigal of Promises, and endearing Assurances; but such as were no more to be confided in, than a Whore's Vows and Tears, and a Sharper's Caresses. Who that hears *Boanerges*, can chuse but think, that the old Primitive Zeal of the Apostolical Times, is revived in ours, notwithstanding the daily Efforts of Incredulity and Atheism? But alas! Draw the Veil, and you discover the Man: Pride, Ambition, Avarice, Revenge and Irreligion, appear in all his Actions and Pursuits.

Thus when *Budnetto* has sent Abroad two or three detach'd Descriptions, Expectation is rous'd, and you persuade your self that the whole Poem is of a Piece; but when you come near, and view it more closely, you find it a wretched Medly of incoherent Patches of *Velvet*, *Linsey-Woolsey*, and sometimes Cloth of Gold, but seldom any Thing so precious in all his voluminous Scriptions, which render the whole, the visible Product of a most miserable Poetaster. These trifling Authors make themselves indeed taken Notice of, but certainly not much to their Advantage. They might otherwise have past silently, and unobserved, from the Booksellers Stalls, to the Tobacconists, Pastry-Cooks, or Grocers, with Abundance of infinitely more meritorious Work; but they chose rather in their Passage to be acquainted with Ignominy, and make their Exit in a Noise, though in one so disagreeable as an Hiss; for they can never go off with the more joyful Claps of an Audience.

Of a just and judicious Audience, I grant you, (said I) but that is not to be found in these Regions, where Ignorance and Caprice preside and determine the Fate of Knowledge and Wit. These little Parcel Efforts, which go before the main Body of our Authors Performances, have seldom failed of Success with

with the Vulgar: and how prevalent a Part that is of this City you know: So that I can't think the Author of the ſubſcrib'd *Homer* out in his Politicks in the Method he took.

But granting all this (ſaid *Laudon*) nay, granting that the Tranſlation it ſelf is good; yet can't I diſcover how that can make a Poet. We find none arrived at that Title among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, by any profeſs'd Tranſlation: *Terence* indeed, and *Plautus* took their Comedies from *Menander*, and ſome other *Greek* Poets; but then they made them Originals, and have given us in them the Spirit, Freedom and Maſtery of Originals; nor can we at this Diſtance diſcover, that they did much more than make a meer Imitation of them. *Seneca* had been guilty of fewer Errors than he is, if he had kept cloſer to *Euripides* and *Sophocles*, in thoſe Plays, where he has choſen the ſame Subject with thoſe great Poets.

A Poet is a much more excellent Thing, than any Tranſlator can be; for he that deſerves that Name, muſt diſcover a Supream Judgment and Genius, and ſuch great Qualities, as have given Life to *Homer*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, *Virgil*, &c. for ſo many Hundred Years.

While *Laudon* was thus earneſt on the Excellence of Poetry, we found that *Moriſina* and *Euſebia* were hotly engag'd in a Diſpute; and on Enquiry into the Matter, *Euſebia* ſaid, *Moriſina* is reviving her old Enmity to Poetry, and with ſome Warmth expreſſes her Wonder, that Men of your Senſe ſhould employ your Thoughts and your Time on ſuch jingling and impious Trifles.

THE

THE *Complete* ART OF POETRY.

DIALOGUE I.

Of the Nature, Uſe, Excellence, Riſe, and Progreſs of POETRY.

I Muſt confeſs, (ſaid *Euſebia*) I am not a little ſurprized to find Men, and Chriſtians ſo much taken up with Conſiderations of what is at beſt but an unjuſt Task put on Boys at School, and the Labours of idolatrous Heathens, and voluptuous Atheiſts; eſpecially, when Reaſon and Religion afford Objects ſo much more worthy of their

their Thoughts and Application. What can be more sublime, and more worthy the Employment of a rational Mind, than the Consideration of the wonderful Works of the Deity? The vast Expanse replenish'd with those amazing Appearances that fill the Soul with a large and just Idea of the Producer of all these Wonders: The ineffable Attributes of an Omnipotent Being, which, as he made us all, sustains by his Power and Goodness, the whole System of things, the various Faculties of that Image of this Being, the human Mind? Or, to come lower down, what can afford a greater Pleasure, than to look into this little World Man himself, and view the Order, Use, and Disposition of his Parts, all either depending on one another, or adapted to the Preservation, or Ease of the Whole?

But if again we raise our Thoughts from the miraculous Operations of the Divine Maker's Power, both in the great World, and the little one, to his Goodness, in his Love to Mankind, in sending down his only Son to redeem us by his own Pains, Death, and Ignominy, from that Forfeiture our own Follies and Vices had made; and by leaving behind him such Rules, that the very Unbelievers themselves allow sufficient to make the whole Kind happy, if followed as proposed.

But can any thing oppose these Rules, this merciful Design of our Comfort and Felicity, more than the Art (if you will have it called so) of Poetry; for this debauches Mankind, destroying his Vertue and Piety, while it strengthens his Passions, and indulges their Government, soothing all his vicious Inclinations, corrupting his Morals, and lulling asleep all Remorse in the false but bewitching Charms of the Vanities of Love and Lust; of Rage, Violence, Revenge, which taking Possession of a Soul now us'd to the Pleasure of such strong Emotions, finds

all

all the calm Impulſes of Religion, unaffecting an
inſipid.

For what are all the Subjects the Poets have choſe
to write on, but Luſt, (which they miſcal Love
Revenge, (which they dignify with the ſpecious Tit
of Honour,) Murders, Rapes, Inceſt, and the like
And theſe with their whole Skill they adorn with a
the Allurements of Numbers and Language that Wi
and Wickedneſs can ſupply. You have your ſel
averr'd, that Poetry is the Product of Affluence an
Eaſe; but a Chriſtian Life is a Life perfectly oppo
ſite to Eaſe; 'tis a Life of Mortification and Self
Denial; a perpetual Warfare againſt the World, th
Fleſh, and the Devil; an Enemy to that lazy Tran
quillity and Indolence that muſt give a Reliſh to Poe
try, as well as a Riſe to it.

Nor are theſe my Sentiments only; we find th
Primitive Fathers of the Church as zealous againſt it
as Words can expreſs. If you will not regard me
filly Woman, will you take Notice of *Tertullian*
St. *Cyril*, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Clement* of *Alexandria*, St. *Chry*
ſoſtom, and St. *Auſtin*, the laſt of whom begs God
Pardon for having in his Youth read, even *Virgil*
himſelf, with Sentiments of Pleaſure. Nay, the ve
ry *Jeſuits*, (for ſome Religion well followed is bette
than none) even in theſe latter Ages, and in the
darkeſt State of Popery in *Spain*, diſcover a handſom
Zeal againſt that Part of it called *Dramatick*, as *Ped*
de Guzman, *Campanella*, and ſome others.

But, that you may not think, that I have nothing
but Names to urge, mere Authorities without Reaſon
let what is brought by *Lactantius* ſatisfy you to the
contrary. *The Comick Fable* (ſays he) *brings nothing t*
your Conſideration, but the Debauching of Virgins, or th
Intrigues of Women of a ſcandalous Character: And th
more excellent the Poet is, the deeper the Impreſſions ar
made on the Hearers. The Fineneſs and Elegance of th
Expreſſion, fix theſe Things in the Minds of the Audience
An

And Tragedy brings nothing elſe before you, but Parricides, Inceſts, and other Wickedneſs, in all their Pomp and Magnificence.

But if this touch you not, as the Reproaches of thoſe whom Religion had made its Enemies, hear *Plato* himſelf a Heathen Philoſopher: He tells us, that Fraud, Rapine, and all Manner of Violence, are commanded or countenanced by the Poets, and that by Precedents and Examples drawn from the Gods themſelves. Thus is *Mercury* made the God of Stealing; and how undutifully does *Jupiter* himſelf deal with his Father? What Piques, Feuds, and domeſtick Quarrels among the Gods in Heaven? God is never to be repreſented (ſays this admirable Philoſopher) whether in Songs or in Tragedy, otherwiſe than Juſt, Good, and Gracious, and on no Account to be ſaid to be the Author of Evil. Thus *Homer*, your idolized *Homer*, is guilty, when he tells you of two Veſſels in *Jupiter*'s Cellar of Gifts, to be beſtowed on human Kind; one full of Good, the other full of Evil, and that he generally delights to mix them.

Of the ſame Kind is the Broil and Controverſy among the Gods, put to the Arbitration of *Jupiter* and *Themis*.

Nor muſt God be repreſented as diſguiſing himſelf, and putting on ſeveral Shapes, to carry on ſome Cheat and Impoſture; or indeed, be capable of any Change, Paſſion, or Perturbation. Nor is the lying Dream ſent by *Jupiter* to *Agamemnon*, to be excuſed: So ſenſible was even a Heathen Philoſopher of the Abuſes and falſe Notions of the Deity, which were ſpread by the Poets.

But this Conduct of the Poets touch'd not only the Philoſophers; ſome of their own Tribe and Fraternity, out of Envy, Revenge, or ſome other Motive, have laid open the Crimes and Guilt of others. Thus I find that *Ariſtophanes*, as I have ſeen him quoted, accuſes *Euripides* for bringing on the Stage

Pha-

Phædra's, *Stenobœa*'s, and such like wicked Strumpets; and that he taught by his Expreſſions, Scepticiſm, or an univerſal Doubt of all things the moſt evident and certain that are, which made the Way eaſy to Atheiſm: That he farther, by Words, inſinuated the Uſe of Equivocation, and juſtified Perjury.

My Tongue did Swear, my Mind was never Sworn.

If theſe were the Faults of your *Euripides*, *Homer*, and the reſt, how have the Moderns improv'd them in their Wickedneſs? Look into our *Beaumont*, *Fletcher*: And what are their Plays, but a general Butchery and Brothel, where every one is murdered or debauched? No Character ſo ſacred, but is there prophaned: And if the *Athenians* made Kings unfortunate under a *Democraſy*; they make them wicked under a Monarchy. Wicked do I ſay; nay, abandoned, more profligate, and leſs reaſonable, than Nature ever produced in any Climate, or any Age.

What are the *King and No King*, the *Maid's Tragedy*, *Rollo*, and the reſt of their celebrated Plays, but unnatural and unneceſſary Murders, and exceſſive and inceſtuous Luſt? What are moſt, if not all of our Comedies, but downright Obſceneneſs impudently offer'd to the View of Ladies of Virtue and Honour, and Men of the firſt Quality?

But not to confine my ſelf to the Stage in my Accuſations of Poetry; what are their other Parts of this boaſted Art, but Excurſions into Folly, Luxury, Luſt, and Profaneneſs? Caſt but your Eye into your Miſcellanies, nothing but vain Love, Deifying your Miſtreſſes, and Debauching the very Holy Scriptures themſelves, to your vile Purpoſes: And this is moſt evident in *Cowley* himſelf, in that Part of his Poems called his *Miſtreſs*; tho' a Reverend Prelate has endeavour'd to waſh that Poet white, to no Purpoſe, in my poor Opinion, ſince he has rather contaminated himſelf in the Defence, than juſtify'd his Friend. But I would believe, that this Life of *Cowley* was writ-

written before that worthy Divine was entered into Orders.

But quitting the Impiety of Poetry, which, I think, is beyond Controverſy, I would fain know, in what lies its Excellence; a miſerable Jingle of Words, and Sounds of no Manner of Uſe or Advantage to human Kind. All other Arts are of Uſe in Life; this pretends only to Pleaſure, and that a very weak and faint one, in my Opinion, and produces ſo little Regard and Advantage in the general Eſteem of the World, that the needy Profeſſors of this divine Art, as you call it, are the moſt ſcandalous and deſpis'd of the Creation: Idle, lazy, indolent Things, whoſe Heads are ſo full of fooliſh Points, quaint Expreſſions, and Jingle of Sounds, that there is no Room left in them for Prudence, Reaſon, and a neceſſary Care of themſelves.

Cuſtom has indeed fix'd the Poets in the Schools, for the Uſe of Boys; but then one would think, that when they are arrived at Man's Eſtate, they ſhould ceaſe to play the Child, and quit Poetry and Verſe, as they do *Taw* and *Chuck-Farthing*. I wiſh indeed the Schools uſed our Children to better Books; for theſe often fix themſelves ſo in their Heads, in their tender Years, that they cannot get off the Folly all their Lives after, to the Ruin of many a hopeful Youth, that might elſe have thriven in the World, and have been uſeful in his Generation, to the Support of himſelf and his Family, by ſome honeſt Employment: Whereas, being now bewitch'd with Poetry, he is vilely content to be a Slave to ſome one or more Bookſellers, which wretched Maintenance is, perhaps, helped out a little now and then by a ſordid Alms, got by flattering ſome worthleſs great Man, who, tho' he be fond of the Adulation, will yet be more generous to his Miſtreſs, or his *Valet de Chambre*, than to one of theſe inſpired Sons of *Apollo*.

For

For ſhame then (O *Laud-a*) ſince the World juſtly allows you Senſe and Underſtanding, and your Acquaintance know you have Religion, eſpouſe no more a Trifle, a peſtiferous Trifle, which is evidently oppoſite to both; that can afford as little real Pleaſure as Profit, and is ſo evidently deſtructive of Religion and Morality.

Here *Euſebia* made an End; and after a little Pauſe *Moriſina*, in the moſt graceful Manner in the World, thus began, addreſſing her ſelf to *Euſebia*.

Oh! My *Euſebia*, (ſaid ſhe) you began your Invective againſt the moſt harmonious Art in the World, with ſo much Harmony, that you raviſhed my Soul up to, nay, I think, above the third Heaven, where I viewed about me in the vaſt extended Space, Myriads of luminous Bodies turning round on their own *Axes*, and as many Turbillions, or Whirlings of their ſeveral depending Planets moving round them in a wonderful and conſtant Order, ſetting forth the Omnipotence, Goodneſs, Bounty, and Wiſdom, of that eternal Poet, or Creator, who deſigned, produced, and formed the harmonious Poem of the Univerſe. But in this not knowing it your ſelf, you exerted the Poet in the great and glorious Images of thoſe Miracles, which you ſet before us. I confeſs, that there is no Object more capable of ſatisfying the large Appetite, and reſtleſs Deſire of the human Soul, whoſe extenſive Faculties nothing ſeems able to fill, but that Supream Being that fills the univerſal Space, that is, God. Certainly, there is no Body that is capable of thinking juſtly, or that can raiſe his Thought above the tranſitory Goods of this ſublunary World; at leaſt, I am confident, that there is none of this Company who is not of Opinion, that the Conſiderations of Religion, its Duties, its Rewards, and the like, are the chief, if not the only Satisfaction, they can receive, without any Weariſomneſs or Satiety. But then, theſe ſublime Speculations, which

you

ou have mentioned, are confined to a very few, in Life ſo Active, as Providence has ſeem'd to ordain at of Mankind to be. The neceſſary Reſult of oſe Duties which our Subſiſtance and Happineſs im-oſe upon us, require ſo many, and ſuch frequent vocations, that this is a Pleaſure not often to be njoyed, and not by any conſiderable Number of the pecies. And how excellent ſoever theſe Seraphick ontemplations may be, as certainly they are excel-ent; yet they appear to me, to be of a more inferi-r Degree than thoſe Duties of Religion which have n immediate Regard to Action, and our ſocial En-agements to one another: For thoſe are confin'd to articulars, and the Joys they give, as well as the ood they bring, extend no farther than to our ſelves; ut thoſe of Action, to all Mankind.

The whole Current and Drift of both the Old and ew Teſtament, is to make us good Neighbours, that , uſeful Members of the Society in which God and ature have plac'd us. To this End are all the Do-trines of our Saviour directed, that we love God bove all things, and our Neighbour as our ſelves; nd this very Love of God is determined by our Love f our Neighbour. At this ſame Aim levels the Sub-uing, or Reducing our Paſſions and Appetites into uſt Bounds; ſo that they may not tranſport us to offer Injuries to others, which is the whole Buſineſs f the Goſpel; which, if indeed we fully and faith-ully follow'd, there would be no Need of any other elp to our Inſtruction or Conduct. But in an Age when thoſe Divine Doctrines have not all that Influ-nce which they ought to have: Nay, when Men are o cold too, and ſo negligent of them, certainly, whatever contributes to the ſame End, and to rouze the Minds of Men to thoſe Duties which the Goſpel recommends, muſt be allowed to have proportionable Value to the Good they produce: How far Poetry does this, we ſhall ſee hereafter.

Here-

Hereafter, again, however valuable and excellen
theſe Contemplations really may be, yet I canno
find them enjoin'd by our great Teacher, who cam
down from Heaven to inſtruct us; nor could the
indeed be enjoin'd by him, becauſe ſo few are capa
ble, by Underſtanding, and Leiſure, to put them i
Practice: But at the ſame Time, that theſe conten
plative Duties are not injoin'd, I find an unexceptio
nable Injunction of the Duties of Action.

But my *Euſebia*, I will not force a Senſe upon you
Words, which, doubtleſs you never deſign'd them: I
will not ſuppoſe, that you mean, that theſe Medita
tions are at leaſt general Duties of Religion; but tha
they are more worthy, and more noble Employment
of our leiſure Hours, than any thing elſe. Give me
Leave to ask you one Queſtion, fair *Euſebia*, Which
would you your ſelf prefer, that noble, and truly ge
nerous Prince, who deplored the Loſs of a Day, when
he had not done ſome more than common Good, or
thoſe Monaſtick Recluſes (who were ſo far from
troubling themſelves with the Care of others, that
they were entirely provided for themſelves) with
their Pretences of the ſublime Contemplations of their
Solitudes: I am confident, that ſo generous and pub
lick a Spirit as *Euſebia*, will give it to the Emperor,
notwithſtanding the ſanctimonious Look and Habit,
as well as Pretences of the Monk.

God has form'd us for Socie y, and whatever con
tributes moſt to that End, muſt be moſt agreeable to
the Author of us, and by Conſequence, moſt meritori
ous in Mankind, deſtin'd to that ſame End.

I am perſwaded, That you are too much a Miſtreſs
of Reaſon, and of too delicate and refin'd a Taſte, to
ſet up for an Advocate of Barbariſm and Ignorance,
and to exclude a Man from the Study and Learning
of all Manner of Arts and Sciences whatſoever, whe
ther Mechanical or Liberal: For that indeed would

be a perfect Piece of *Don Quixotiſm*, and the Setting up a Notion that is not only utterly impracticable, but what, if it were not ſo, muſt deprive us of many of the Neceſſary and all the Decencies of Life.

For of Arts, ſome are Neceſſary to our Ever-Being and Subſiſtance, and others to our Well-Being. If no Arts were allowable but ſuch as were immediately and indiſpenſably conducive to our Subſiſtance, ten Parts in Eleven of the World muſt become idle and uſeleſs. A Tent-Maker ſeems to be none of theſe, and yet we find it to have been the Occupation of the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, and at which, he wrought, even during his Miſſion, towards his Support: Nor had the ſame Saint been without the Benefit of thoſe more liberal, which he had learnt at the Feet of *Gamaliel*.

You do me but Juſtice, replied *Euſebia*, when you imagine, that I am not for the Suppreſſion of all Manner of Arts and Sciences; that were, to prefer the dark Night of *Gothick* Ignorance, to the politer Day of *Athens* and *Rome*. I allow all uſeful Mechanick Arts, and all profitable Sciences and Arts, which diſtinguiſh Men from Brutes, and the civiliz'd, from the barbarous Part of Mankind. But I am for excluding idle and uſeleſs Arts, which, as they ſprang from Vanity and Luxury, ſo they are directed to the Support of their impious Origins, without any Manner of Benefit to human Society: And of this Number I look upon Poetry to be the Principal.

I am glad, ſaid *Moriſina*, that I have not miſtaken your Sentiments in what I have ſaid; for then I cannot be far from the Right; and yet, my dear *Euſebia*, I fear, if you cut off all that have proceeded from Vanity and Luxury, you will be thought no great Friend to Induſtry, nor have much Intereſt in our trading Cities and Corporations, which owe their Opulence to little elſe, but this *en paſſant*.

I hope therefore, that you will farther grant me, that thoſe Arts which are moſt employed in our Actions, and their Courſe, our Manners, which they form and regulate, are the moſt valuable Arts. I dare believe, that you will likewiſe allow, that it is not poſſible for Men in the preſent State of human Affairs, to be wholly without Diverſion, the Mind muſt be ſometimes releaſed from the Intenſeneſs of Thought, and the fatiguing Purſuit of Buſineſs, or it could never go thro' the Duties incumbent upon it.

This I will alſo grant you, ſaid *Euſebia*, becauſe indeed it ſeems to carry its own Evidence in Experience; and the wiſe *Solomon* confirms it, when he tells us, that there is a Time for all things; a Time to work, and a Time to play; but then it does not follow, that theſe Relaxations ſhould be either derived from, or productive of Guilt.

Submitting therefore, aſſum'd *Moriſina*, Poetry to the bare Title of a meer Diverſion, it is as ſuch neceſſary; but it is a Diverſion that conveys Virtue to our unguarded Hours, and makes its Way, by perſwaſive Pleaſure, to fix it ſelf in the Heart, in the Midſt of our Recreations.

Firſt, I think it may be eaſily made out, that there is nothing has a greater Power and Influence on the Heart, than Poetry, Reaſon from its Nature aſſerts it, Experience avows it from Facts beyond Controverſy. So that if we can prove, that Poetry employs that Power for the Benefit of the Mind, or may, or has employ'd it to that End, I gain my Point.

Poetry is compounded of three Arts, nay, of the Eſſence of three moſt illuſtrious Arts (or perhaps, I might juſtly ſay, was the Parent of them) Eloquence, Muſick, and Painting. But theſe three Arts have given abundant Proofs of what ſtrong Impreſſions they are capable of making on the human Soul, when in their Perfection. I have, my ſelf, who am no great Reader, read of Examples in *Greece* and *Italy*, of this Force

orce I ſpeak of, where Perſons have fallen in Love ith Figures admirably drawn by ſome great Painers; nay, that the Artiſts themſelves have been enaour'd of their own Draughts, and doated on them s on a Miſtreſs of real Fleſh and Blood; and this has, mong the *Italian* Painters, diſtinguiſh'd the Pictures f the ſame Hand, into thoſe drawn by Study, Aplication, and Love; and it is obſerv'd, that the roductsof the laſt are always the moſt admirable.

We have undoubted Hiſtory (as I am aſſur'd by ood Authors) of two *Greeks*; one was ſo far in Love ith the Statue of *Venus*, that he ventur'd his Life in eing lock'd into her Temple all Night, for the Oportunity of ſatisfying his Paſſion; and the other in'd away, and died for being hindred from perpeually gazing on, admiring and embracing of a Stae in the City of *Athens*.

But leſt theſe be thought the Effect of Madneſs, nore than of the Art, let any one of the leaſt *Guſto*, aſt his Eyes with Indifference, if he can, on the aintings of *Raphael*, *Rubens*, or any other great Maer, where the Paſſions are delineated. No, it is imoſſible to view that of our Saviour being taken own from the Croſs, done by *Jordan* of *Antwerp*, in he Hands of the Duke of *Marlborough*, and not have is Soul tranſfix'd with that Sword of Sorrow, which s ſaid to have pierc'd that of the Virgin Mother on hat Occaſion, and which is ſo admirably expreſs'd n her Figure in this very Piece.

The Power of Muſick has furniſh'd us with many tories. as well as Fables. As the Cure of the Sting f the *Tarantula*, the Charming of the Bites of Serents, and the Cure or Allay of an Evil Spirit, are what daily Experience proves in *Italy*, and what the oly Scriptures themſelves confirm to us on the laer Account.

The Force of Eloquence, that ſo often rais'd, and ppeas'd the Violence of Popular Commotions, and

caus'd ſuch Convulſions in *Athens* and *Rome*, is no
ſenſibly deſcrib'd in a modern Author, whom I ha
lately been reading. We need only conſider *Cæſa*
ſays he, one of the greateſt and wiſeſt of mor
Men; to ſee him come on the Tribunal full of H
tred and Revenge, with a determin'd Reſolution
condemn *Ligarius*; yet, upon the Force of *Cice*
Eloquence (in an Oration in his Defence) began
change Countenance, turn pale, ſhake to that D
gree, that the Paper he held fell out of his Hands,
if he had been frighten'd with Words (obſerves o
Author) who was never ſo with Blows, and at la
change all his Anger into Clemency, and acquit t
Criminal, inſtead of condemning of him.

But the ſtrength of theſe three mighty Powers a
united in Poetry, and has made it formerly to b
thought to be inſpired, and give it the Name of D
vine; nor can it indeed be diſputed, but that th
Force of nice Reaſoning, and the height of Conce
tions and Expreſſions may be, and are found in Po
try as well as in Oratory: The Life, and Spirit
Repreſentation or Picture, as much as in Paintin
and the Force of Sounds, as well as in Muſick; a
how far theſe three Natural Powers, join'd togethe
may extend, and to what wonderful Effects, I lea
to thoſe who have throughly conſidered them.

But I think it ſo far from being a Doubt, wheth
the Force of theſe three Arts are in Poetry, that
may be eaſily prov'd, that they drew what they ha
from Poetry. Long before *Pericles*, *Demoſthenes*,
the other mighty Speakers of *Athens*; we find *Neſ*
and *Ulyſſes* in *Homer*, Maſters of all the Powers
Eloquence: And as Muſick conſiſts of ſhort and lo
Sounds, and thoſe rais'd higher or depreſs'd lowe
it ſeems to my weak Judgment, that this Melo
ous Art was likewiſe born of Verſe, which as I ha
read, eſpecially in the *Greek*, conſiſts of the ſam
Every Body has heard how *Octavia* ſwoun'd awa

n *Virgil's* reading ſome Verſes in his Sixth Book of *Eneids*. Then for Painting, the moſt maſterly Pro-ucts of it, in all Antiquity, were drawn from *Ho-er*. *Euphranor* came to *Athens*, on Purpoſe to hear Profeſſor read that Poet, that he might form his lea of *Jupiter* in his Painting, from the Poet's De-cription, by which he made a Portraict, that was he Wonder of after Ages. The ſame hapned to *Phi-ias*, in that admirable Statue of *Jupiter*, which he ade after the Model, he found in the ſame Place of *omer*.

There is indeed no manner of Queſtion, but that ue Poetry has Force to raiſe the Paſſions, and to llay them; to change or to extinguiſh them: Thus he drooping Courage of the *Lacedemonians*, was re-nimated by the Poetry of *Tyrteus*: And the Revenge nd Cruelty of *Phalaris*, chang'd into Kindneſs and Eſteem, by the Odes of *Steſichorus*.

From what I have ſaid, the Power of juſt Poetry, ver the Heart, the Sourſe of Action, is, I hope, retty evident; and from the Inſtances I have given, o prove this Power, it is not leſs plain, that it has een, and may be made uſe of to the Advantage of Vertue, and the Deſtruction of Vice; for the melio-ating our Manners, and the rooting out of evil Paſ-ions, and planting a happy Tranquility in their Room.

All the Accuſations you bring from the Fathers, nd others, ſeem to me to be levell'd at the Abuſe of he Art; which afford not the leaſt Shadow of Rea-on againſt the Art it ſelf, or its Uſe and Excellence; ay, the more excellent a Thing is, the greater may he Abuſe be, which is made of it. I confeſs I do ot know what Authority the Fathers have a Right o, either in our Religon or Conduct, and therefore muſt leave that Point to the Divines; but I remem-er that I have ſome where read, that when *Julian* he Apoſtate, wou'd not ſuffer the Chriſtians to have

the Liberty of reading *Homer*, or any other Heathen Poet, that was us'd then in their Schools, the Christian Fathers set one *Apellinarius* (I think his Name was) to write in all the Parts of Poetry for the Use of the Christians, in Odes, in Heroic Verse, nay even in Tragedy, and Comedy; by which Means they disappointed the Designs of the Apostate. So useful did the Fathers by this Procedure, judge that Poetry it self was, without the Defects introduc'd into it by the Wickedness of Men, who have not exempted Religion it self from their Corruption.

I wonder that you have forgotten a Thing objected by one of the Fathers, against the High-heel'd Shoes then worn in Tragedy. It is *Tertullian* (if my Memory fail me not) who says, that the Devil set them on their lofty Buskins to give Christ the Lye, who has told us, that no Body can add one Cubit to his Stature. At this rate of arguing, I am afraid our once high Commodes, and the present High-crown'd Hats of the Village Dames, are not free from this diobolical Design. If the Fathers always talk'd in this wild Manner, I know not how to pay any great Deference to their Discourses.

I dare believe, that it will not be expected from me to compare this *admirable Art* with the others which are concerned in the Regulation of our *Manners*, and *Passions*; and to shew which is the most valuable, because as they are generally confin'd to the *Learned*, they cannot be so well known to us *Women*; and for that very Reason, in my Opinion, are of a lower Degree of Merit and Excellence. They, besides, if I am not misinform'd, consist chiefly in *Precepts* and *Definitions*, and reach therefore but to a *Few*; but *Poetry* spreads to *All*, and sheds its benign Influence upon *All*; it teaches by Example, which strike all Capacities. I learn from them, if not the *Definitions* of *Virtue*, yet what is of more Consequence: *That to be Happy, we must not depart from it*;

That

That to avoid Vice and Guilt, we muſt reſiſt the firſt Approaches of Paſſions, ſince our yielding to thoſe firſt Approaches, gives them the Maſtery, and leads us into all our deplorable Miſeries.

I am unacquainted with *Homer*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and the other great *Poets* of *Antiquity*, only as far as *Chapman*, *Ogilby*, *Hobbs*, and ſome more Modern Tranſlations inform me; yet by theſe, I find, thoſe *Poets* teaching by *Fable*, or what is call'd in the Holy Scriptures, *Parable*, which, as it reaches all Capacities, ſo it touches all Tempers and Conſtitutions.

But that which determines me entirely for *Poetry*, is, That God has made uſe of it in the *Sacred Scriptures*, by his *Prophets*, *Legiſlators*, and *moſt favour'd of Things*: That the *Pſalms*, *Canticles*, *Job*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, are all *Poems*, if one may believe the *Learned*, and all written in Verſe.

So that I muſt conclude (my dear *Euſebia*) That *Poetry*, which is of ſuch Uſe in the Correcting, nay, preventing of our *Vices*, and reſtoring or confirming our *Virtues*; That *Poetry*, whoſe Force *God* himſelf has thought the beſt *Vehicle* for the *ſtrongeſt Emanations* of his *Spirit*; can never juſtly be thought unworthy the Conſideration of Men of the greateſt *Religion* and *Senſe*.

Give me leave to add, That if it come ſhort of theſe Perfections in our Time, and that its Profeſſors are in *mean* and *unhappy Circumſtances*; it is the Fault of our *Governors*, our Men of *Power*, who either do not know, or will not give themſelves the Pains to diſtinguiſh between a *Poetaſter*, and a *Poet*; a meer *Trifler* in *Verſification*, and a great *Genius*: That can give us, if juſtly encouraged, Things more worthy to entertain and inſtruct us. Nay, Experience has too ſcandalouſly ſhewn us, That they always, or generally favour the *Poetaſter*, for the Deference he pays them, rather than the *Poet*, whoſe Soul can not

ſubmit to ſuch ſervile Offices, as they require for their *Smiles*. And in this Diſcouragement of juſt *Performers* of this Art, I muſt with Reluctance, tho' with Juſtice own, that the *Ladies* have been as the *Men*; nay, I fear more ſcandalouſly ſo, while they have proſtitued both their *Underſtanding* and *Modeſty*, in filling the *Theatres* for the Benefit of ſuch *Scribblers*, who for their little Regard to the juſt *Character* of the *Sex*, deſerv'd rather my Lord *Rocheſter*'s Correction of *Black Will*, a Cudgel, than the Reward of a throng'd Houſe for their Benefit; and for their *Ignorance* in their *Art*, ought rather to have been confin'd to a *Bartholomew* Booth, or a *Mountebank* Stage, than be admitted to diſcover their Follies in the *Royal Theatres*, at the Expence of the Reputation of a whole Nation, ſince more polite Foreigners, by ſuch nice Specimens as theſe, muſt carry away a very deſpicable Opinion of the *Engliſh Wit* and *Poetry*.

Moriſina had no ſooner done, but *Morat*, the Black, coming into the Room with ſome *Burgundy*, ſhe ſeeming to give him ſome Directions, left the Company, as if about ſome domeſtick Affairs; yet certainly it was the Effect of her natural Diffidence and Modeſty, that ſhe might not be forc'd to bluſh to hear her own Praiſe, or find what ſhe had ſaid leſs acceptable than ſhe deſir'd.

Laudon could not conceal the Satisfaction he found in her agreeable Diſcourſe; and every Body expreſs'd the Pleaſure they had found all the Time ſhe was ſpeaking. Even *Euſebia* her ſelf, out of a Candour not common to the Sex, was not ſilent in her Praiſe; tho' Women are not the moſt eaſy People in the World under the Support of Conviction.

When the Heat of the Praiſe of *Moriſina* was a little now over, I addreſs'd my ſelf to *Euſebia*, in this Manner.

Tho', Madam, I think, that the Lady of the Houſe has ſufficiently anſwer'd all your Objections againſt

Poe-

etry: For whereas you made it wicked, irreligious
d trifling, ſhe has ſhewn it to be religious, pious,
Uſe; nay, of the greateſt Importance to the pro-
oting of *Virtue*, and employ'd by God himſelf to
s Omniporent Ends, in the illuminating and re-
aiming of Mankind: That it has a triple innate
orce, that is, The Power of *Eloquence*, *Muſick*, and
inting; nay, that theſe three Arts deriv'd thoſe Powers
hich the World owns, and Experience proves, from
etry; and that therefore it can be no *trifling* Study,
vain Amuſement, but worthy of the Application of
en of *Senſe*. *Virtue*, and *Religion*.

Tho, I ſay, ſhe has prov'd all this, in a moſt eaſy,
vlous, and pleaſant Manner; yet give me Leave
add ſome more particular Anſwers to your Objecti-
s, in a more explicite Manner.

Firſt, Madam, I muſt obſerve, That much of the
ccuſations of *Plato*, as well as of the *Fathers*, is
unded on the Abſurdities of the Heathen Syſtem of
eligion in general, of which *Homer*, and the Poets
leaſt, as far as we can diſcover) were not the
unders, but made uſe of it as they found it, in Or-
r to make their moral Doctrines take with a People,
hoſe corrupt Idea of the Deity, the Product of more
rk and ignorant Times, had already poſſeſs'd with
otions which muſt be admitted as Fundamentals
ith their Inſtructors, if they would pretend to have
y Effect upon them.

I know very well, that Mr. *Rapin* in his Reflections
n *Ariſtotle*'s *Poeſie*, is pleas'd to ſay, by Way of a
ery awkward Praiſe of *Homer*, *That he was in a*
anner the Author of Paganiſm, the Religion of which
eſtabliſh'd by his Poems; *ſo one may ſay, That never*
rophet had ſo many Followers as he. Yet, as this is a
ery ſcandalous Praiſe of an excellent Perſon, ſo is
falſe in the very Fact: For if he had confirm'd
aganiſm in *Greece*, and its Colonies, 'tis certain, that
he reſt of the World, which had no Communication

with that Country, could not be influenc'd by a
Writer of it: and we know, that the Plurality
Gods was ſpread thro' *Aſia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*, amo
Nations who never heard of *Homer*, or of his Count

But to come to your particular Objections, fro
the *Fathers*, and from *Plato*, we find, that whatev
the *Ancient Chriſtians* might think, the modern Divi
all hold, That God may, to good Ends, make uſe
evil Means and Inſtruments: And thus was *Pandar*
employ'd by *Jove* and *Pallas*, to break the Peace,
well as the Lying Dream that was ſent to *Agamemn*
We are acquainted with the Story of *Achab* too we
and the Lying Spirit mentioned in the Hiſtory
that King of *Iſrael*. If we find Fault with *Homer*
that Account, the ſame may be ſaid of the two B
rels or Veſſels in *Jupiter*'s Cellar; for we now kno
the Original of all the *Greek* Fables.

Not to have repreſented their Gods with *Face* a
Fingers, &c. with *Actions*, *Paſſions*, and other Modi
cations, after the manner of Man, had been to f
nothing at all. St. *Paul*, who ſoar'd as high as a
Body, and had the *Gift of Tongues*, declar'd the thin
above, to be *ineffable*. *Homer* knew this, and ther
fore would not banter the World with hard Wor
and *unintelligible Jargon*, as *Plato* and others ha
ſince done; but did accommodate his Speech to t
Senſes of *Humankind*, by *Metaphors*, *Similitudes*, a
Parables, after the manner of *Moſes*, and the old Pr
phets before him. He entertains, and fills us to t
utmoſt of our Organs and Capacities. He finds ſom
thing for all our Senſes, bringing it to our *Ey*
our *Ears*, and our *Feeling*. *Nectar* he provides for o
Taſte, and there always exhales *Ambroſial* Odours
the Divine Preſence. What *Plato*, or an Angel co
ſay farther, paſſes all Underſtanding, and could n
enter our Organs, could have no Reliſh or Proporti
to affect us, more than the *Muſick of the Spheres*.

The wiſeſt Part of the World were always pleaſed with *Fables*, as the moſt delightful Means to convey Inſtruction, and leave the ſtrongeſt Impreſſion on our Minds. Nay, the ſacred Prophets of old, could not invent any thing to heighten the Character of the future *Meſſiah* more, than that he ſhould ſpeak all in *Parables*.

As for the *Fables* which in *Homer*, or on the Stage (I ſpeak of the ancient Stage only) give any Offence, they had, in thoſe old Times, a Thing which they called *Allegory*, which with a great Deal of Cleanneſs and Eaſe, obviated all the Objections and Criminations of the moſt malicious Obſervators. Nor is the Word confin'd to *Heatheniſm*, we meet with it in St. *Paul*, *Galat.* 4. 24. and the Application of it; and to this *Origen* himſelf was glad to have Recourſe, when *Celſus* made his Objections againſt the New and the Old *Teſtament*. As to the Stories of *Eve* and the *Serpent*, *Cain* and *Abel*, the Building of *Babel*, *Sodom*, with *Lot* and his two Daughters, which are Inceſts and pompous Wickedneſs, beyond any thing fabl'd in *Thyeſtes*, and the like, ſays an *Engliſh* Author of Reputation, on this very Subject.

Shall the *Chriſtians* only (ſays *Origen* on this Occaſion) be deny'd the Benefit of the *Allegory*? May not we be allow'd our *Myſtery*, and Tropological Meaning? Thus we find, That what *Lactantius* objects againſt *Homer*, and the *Heathen Tragedy*, is by *Celſus* and the *Heathens* objected againſt our *Bible* and Religion. Beſides, *Clemens of Alexandria*, and *Euſebius*, many Ages ago, made the Diſcovery that *Homer* had moſt of *Fables* from ſome *Hebrew* Tradition, or Original. Nor is *Æſchylus* to be cenſur'd for bringing in *Apollo* ſinging at a Wedding, that much Happineſs ſhould enſue upon it; and that the Child that was to be the Product of it ſhould live long. *Apollo* had the Name of *Laxias* from his double Meaning, which ſhewed the Nature of *Oracles*. *Be not out of Patience*, Thetis, *ſays*

he,

be, this Child ſhall *live*; his *Memory*, his better Part, which *Homer* has enſur'd to the End of the World, according to what our *Spencer* ſays,

For not to have been dipt in Lethe *Lake,*
Cou'd ſave the Son of Thetis *from to die;*
But that blind Bard did him immortal make
In Verſes ſteep'd in Font of Caſtalie.

If therefore it appears from what I have ſaid, That the *Fables* themſelves, with the *Drama* made uſe of, are not ſo raſhly to be cenſur'd; ſure no Body will be ſo vainly critical, as to ſtick upon the particular Sayings mentioned by you, Madam, from *Ariſtophanes*, *Plato*, and *Lactantius*. For their good Sayings we have St. *Paul* citing a whole Verſe out of a Comedy of *Menander*; and *Clemens of Alexandria* brings more Proofs from *Menander*, and other *Comic Poets*, than from all the *Bible*.

On the other Hand, where ill Men are repreſented, we ought not to take it amiſs, that according to their Character they ſay all things; for when we remember the Saying, we remember, that it is the Saying of a *wicked* Perſon.

If with the Gods above I can't prevail,
To move the Gods below I cannot fail.

This is objected as impious in *Juno*. I will not juſtify it by what is ſaid by a ludicrous Author, on this Point, *viz. Why may not* Juno *take as much Liberty with her Tongue, as* Job's *Wife, or any other Old Teſtament Matron?* Firſt, becauſe it may ſeem to ſome ſcrupulous Hearer, to carry the Appearance, or Glance of *Irreligion*; and next, becauſe, it does not ſeem to ſtand in need of any Juſtification at all, according to the *Pagan Theology*: For *Pluto*, *Jupiter*'s Brother, and the third Sovereign of *Nature*, is King of *Hell*, and had

had his Temples and Sacrifices, as had the *Furies* themſelves, ſo different a Notion had the Heathens of them, from what we have of the *Devils*. They were the legal Inſtruments of the Puniſhment of the *Wicked*; but then they carry'd not with them the Notion of being fallen from a beatifick State, by a Rebellion againſt *Omnipotence*, and doom'd to be there in their own Place of Puniſhment.

It is an eaſy Matter to find more Abuſe of the Sayings of the *Holy Scripture*, and the Conſequences of it more tragical, than from any perverted Piece of Poetry; and thus, *Curſe ye Meroz*, ſerves every Body's Turn that has a Mind to be cutting of Throats. And *Campanella*, and *Pedro de Guzman* would urge much more againſt the *Bible*'s being in the vulgar Tongue, on this Account, than againſt the Nurſe of *Hereſy*, this *Hydra*'s Head of *Dramatic Poeſy*.

I know not whether we have any Eye and Inſpection on the Conduct of the *Pulpit*; but there is in ſome of our neighbouring Countries, and I can ſee no Reaſon why there might not be proper Officers, ſuch as Mr. *Harrington* aſſigns to this Office in his *Oceana*, who ſhou'd take Care of the *Doctrine of the Stage*, that nothing be there broach'd, but what tends to the *Edification*, as well as to the *Delight* of the *Spectators* and *Audience*.

But to ſay, *Euripides* brought Harlots on the Stage; in that I believe you are led aſtray, by the Zeal of ſome deſigning Declaimer againſt the Theatre; for his *Phædra* was ſo far from being ſo, that ſhe choſe rather to die than admit of ſuch a Guilt. But had this been true, it had been the Practice of but one Poet; for *Æſchylus* was ſo far from doing ſo, that he introduces not one Woman that can be ſuſpected to be in Love: The Fault of *One Poet* is not to be charg'd to the Reſt, nor on the *Art itſelf*.

If I grant, That in *Tragedy*, the Felicity of the Invention, the Novelty of the Notion, the Strength

of

of Verſe, the Eaſineſs of Expreſſion, ſtill heighten'd from Act to Act; together with the Richneſs of the Figures, the Pomp of the Theatre, the Habits, Geſture, and Voice of the Actors, at the ſame Inſtant charming both the Eyes, and the Ears; ſo the Soul being won, the Judgment is ſurpriz'd, and the whole Man at once led captive; for a Man muſt indeed be of Braſs or Stone to reſiſt ſo many united Charms, and be Maſter of himſelf in the midſt of ſuch Allurements; granting all this, I ſay, Where is the Hurt? What is the Danger, if the End of all this be (as it evidently is) to ſhew *Virtue* in Triumph? The nobleſt Thoughts make the ſtrongeſt Impreſſions: And the juſteſt Paſſions find the kindeſt Reception among us. The Medicine is not the leſs Wholeſome for the Honey, or the Pill for its gilding, nor can a moral Leſſon be leſs profitable, when adorn'd with all the Decorations of the Theatre. I muſt own indeed, that this is the moſt bewitching of all Diverſions, and for that Reaſon, I think, the Theatre to be a Magazine, not to be truſted to *vulgar Hands*, and *common Heads*, or ever to eſcape the ſpecial Eye, and Direction of a *virtuous Government*; ſince it might otherwiſe ſo far degenerate (not to ſay it has ſo far degenerated) as to deſerve the Aſperſions and ill Names, under which the *Jeſuits*, and ſome akin to them in this Nation, won'd render it odious: As when they call it the School of Vice, the Sanctuary of *Venus*, the Temple of Impiety, the Furnace of *Babylon*, the Conſiſtory of Impurity, the Shop of Lewdneſs, the Peſt of the Common-wealth, the Seminary of Debauchery, *Sathans* Feſtival, and the Devil's Dancing-School.

If it be unpardonable, and all together unallowable, to mention or name any Vices at all; then is there no Book free, that is either Hiſtorical, Theological or Moral. The *Holy Scriptures* are full of Narrations of the exceſs of Wickedneſs in every Kind;

the

the Divines harangue againſt the Vices they have deſcrib'd; but *Tragedy* never repreſents a Vice, or even the frail Approaches to any one without a Puniſhment. I ſpeak of juſt *Tragedy*, not of ſuch Stuff, as you, Madam, have with a great deal of Reaſon condemn'd in *Fletcher*, and ſuch as is in Poſſeſſion of the Stage at preſent, full of *Lewdneſs*, *Cruelty*, *Villany*; in which all the Advances to Vice are ſet off with *luſcious Deſcriptions*, which, with the effeminating, amorous Speeches, are got by Heart by the young Girls and young Fellows, and take ſuch Poſſeſſion of their Hearts and Hands, that they quite extirpate all that is *wholeſome* and *uſeful*.

But, Madam, there is no ſuch thing among the *Tragedies* of the Ancients, nor is there any thing like it in its Conſtitution; this is all *Uſurpation*, and *Intruſion* upon the *Scene*, by its having been, through the Careleſsneſs of the Government, permitted to the Management of *ignorant*, and *abandon'd* Creatures, who have nothing in their Eyes, but the *Money* they can any way convey to their own *Private Pockets*, not minding nor caring whether they corrupt the *Audience*; *Religion* and *Morality* being an equal *Jeſt* to theſe ſcandalous *Managers* of the Theatre.

I muſt therefore acknowledge, that moſt of Mr. *Collier*'s Criminations on the *Stage*, as it is debas'd in this Nation, are too true and juſt; but then the Concluſion he draws from this *Abuſe*, is by no Means *juſt*, even from the Principles he fixes at the Opening of his *own* Book, where he lays it down, *for an undoubted Maxim*, That the *Wit* of Man cannot invent any thing more conducive to *Virtue*, and deſtructive of *Vice*, than the *Drama*; and yet for the *Abuſes* of Particulars, he would deſtroy the *Diverſion*: Whereas, all that he could in Reaſon demand, or contend for, was a *Reformation of the Stage*, by removing it from the Hands of *Ignorance* and *Irreligion*, and reſtoring it

to

to its ancient Dignity, and making it, as it was at first design'd by its Founders, the *School of Virtue*.

It is evident from *France*, that the *Evils* complain'd of, are *local*, not general; *adventitious* from the Place and Management, and not from the Nature of the Poem. For *Richelieu*, who besides the establishing the *Academy Royal*, made particular Provisions for the Theatre, excluding from its Representations, not only all immodest Actions, but even any *Double Entendre*; and we find, That any Breach of this Declaration of *Lewis* XIII. will not there escape the Censure of the very Audience it self. Good God! Madam, must we be forc'd to ask? What, are the *French* Ladies more *nicely chast* and virtuous than the *English* Ladies? What, do the *French* Ladies as much excel ours in *Modesty*, as we do them in *Beauty*? Will they check an accidental *Double Entendre*, to the Damnation of the *incautious Poet*; and shall our Ladies throng the Boxes, to hear nothing else? To see criminal Intrigues express'd with so little Regard to the *Modesty* of the Ladies of the first Quality in *England*?

But an Instance of this is worthy your Observation, and it is of the *Theodore* of *Corneille*; where the bare, and distant Conceit of a Lady's being expos'd to Prostitution, was so odious to that nice and scrupulous Audience, that it damn'd the Play.

Corneille justly observes from hence, That the *French* Theatres are much more delicate on that Account, than the Ancient *Fathers* and the *Pulpit*. *However*, says he, *it is some Satisfaction to me, That I see the better, and more sound Part of my Judges impute this ill Success to that Imagination of a Prostitution, which they cou'd not endure, tho' it was well known that it cou'd not take Effect: and that, to allay the Horror of it, I made use of all the Helps that Art and Experience cou'd furnish me withal. Amidst this Disgrace, I rejoice to see the Purity of our Stage, so chast, that a History, the fairest Ornament of the second Book of* St. Ambrose's *Virgins, appears too licentious to pass on*

our

r Stage. What might have been ſaid, if, like that great octor of the Church, I had ſhewn the Virgin in that infa- ous Place; if I had deſcrib'd the various Agitations of her ind, when ſhe was in the Place; if I had drawn the Tears es ſhe felt that Inſtant that ſhe ſaw her Love Didymus me in to her? *'Tis on this Occaſion, that this great Saint akes that Eloquence triumph, which converted St.* Auſtin; *is for this Spectacle that he particularly invites the Vir- ns to open their Eyes.*

I kept her from the Light, and as much as I could, om the Imagination of my Audience; yet, after all my duſtry, the Modeſty *of our Theatre is ſuch, to diſlike at little which the Neceſſity of the Subject compell'd me to ake known.*

This, I hope, is a ſufficient Anſwer to all the par- icular Objections that have been made, either to Poe- y in general, or to its moſt uſeful Part, the *Drama* n particular; and if *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* (made Po- s only by a Party prevailing in King *Charles* the irſt's Time, and ſince prevailing by an unreaſona- le Preſcription, and the Force of good Actors, as Mr. *Rimer* juſtly obſerves) have introduced the moſt nfamous Sight of a Bawdy-Houſe, and all its Filthi- eſs; yet you find the very diſtant Idea of ſuch a lace, damn'd a moſt innocent Play of ſo great a Man as *Corneille* in *France*. If St. *Auſtin* aſk'd God's ardon for having read *Virgil* in his Youth, with leaſure, we do not find St. *Paul*, a much greater aint, and an Apoſtle, repenting his having read *Me- ander*, a Comic *Greek Poet*. If St. *Chryſoſtem* ſeem hard, n ſome Expreſſions, upon the Stage, we yet know, hat he was very familiar with *Ariſtophanes* himſelf in is Cloſet, and form'd his Diction and Stile by him.

In ſhort, if the *Abuſe* of a thing be ever admit- ed as a Reaſon againſt the thing it ſelf, all that is xcellent muſt be thrown aſide, ſince there has been, nd will always be, *Abuſes* of *Religion* it ſelf, the moſt xcellent thing that is.

Thus

Thus, I think the Question is no longer, Whether *Poetry* be an excellent Art, and worthy Encouragement, which is made out beyond a fair Contradiction; but whether all those Scribblers, who have, in this Age and Nation, as well as others, usurp'd the glorious Appellation, should be esteem'd, and meet with those Advantages due only to the truly inspir'd. And that depends alone on the Politeness and Understanding of the People, at least, of that Part which is distinguish'd by Power and Quality, in whose Hands this Dispensation is lodg'd; and which, I fear, is likely to be still erroneous, till some Great Man arise, a *Maecenas*, a *Richlieu*, or a Sir *Philip Sidney*, whose Judgment and Quality may be able, by their Influence, to silence the *Poetasters* and *Versifiers*, and distinguish true Merit, by restoring those Rewards to true Poets, which are now usurp'd by these forward paltry Fellows, who make their Court to the Follies and Crimes of great Men, and not to their Understanding.

Here, *Crites*, I made an End, finding that *Eudoxus* had something to offer on this Head.

Tho' what has been said by my dear *Morisina*, and *Eudon*, and by you, my Friend *Gamaliel*, may seem sufficient to give a full Answer to all the Objections against *Poetry* in general, and even of its particular Parts of any Importance; yet, since the fair *Eusebia* has not only in the Opening of her Discourse, addressed her self to me, but concluded with a solemn Summons to my Sense, and to my Religion, to quit my Inclinations and Favour to this Art, I think my self oblig'd to say something for that Inclination I must own to it, and the Value and Esteem I cannot but have for it.

I confess my Obligations to *Eusebia* for her good Opinion of my Sense, and of my Understanding, which, how weak soever in themselves, yet there is no Man so modest and indifferent in these Particu-

lars

ars, to be ſatisfied with a mean Opinion that others may have of them; and for this Reaſon, every Man finds in himſelf a Satisfaction to have them thought well of by Perſons of ſo good Senſe as *Euſebia* is evidently Miſtreſs of. As for my *Religion*, indeed, that is what every Man of Probity is allow'd to avow, without any Imputation of Vanity; for every Man has an indiſpenſable Duty to be religious, but no Man is obliged to be witty, or have a juſt Idea of the fineſt Arts and Sciences, in order to be admitted into the Number of honeſt Men; which, whoever is guilty of, either profeſs'd, or ſecret Irreligion, cannot be.

First, As to my Senſe, I can never think it in any manner of Danger, by eſpouſing an Art which was ſo much in Eſteem with that State from which all *Europe*, at leaſt, derives its Politeneſs and Learning. Nor can I think it unworthy my Underſtanding, to declare openly for *Poetry*, when I conſider in what Honour and Requeſt *true Poetry* has been, through all Ages and Nations, from the Origin of Mankind to this Day, from *China* to *Peru*, and from *Scythia* to *Arabia*. But indeed, what Value and Diſtinction has it not been in with the beſt and greateſt of Men, as well as with the more inferior Degrees of Mankind.

Among the *Hebrews*, *David* and *Solomon*, the beſt and wiſeſt of Kings, *Job* and *Jeremiah*, the holieſt Men, were the beſt Poets of their Nation and Language, which alone is ſufficient to ſecure my Religion from any injurious Imputation, on the Account of *Poetry*. Among the *Greeks*, the two moſt renowned Sages and Legiſlators, were *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, the laſt of whom is known to have excelled in *Poetry*. *Alexander* the Great never ſlept without the admirable Poems of *Homer*; *Phalaris*, who was inexorable to all other Enemies, relented at the Charms of the Muſe of *Steſichorus*. Among the *Romans*, the firſt Great *Scipio* paſs'd the faireſt Hours of his Life in the Converſation of *Terence*; and he, as well as *Lelius*, is thought

thought to have had a Hand in the Comedies of that *Poet*. *Cæsar* was an excellent *Poet*, as well as *Orator*, and his forgiving, or rather overlooking the rough Raillery of *Catullus*, in one of his Epigrams, was at once an Argument of his Value for the Art, and his Greatness of Mind. *Augustus* was not only a Patron, but a Friend and Companion of *Virgil* and *Horace*, and other Poets of that Age. Nay, he was himself a Pretender to Performance in that Way, as far as his Genius, and his busy Scene of Life would allow. *Mæcenas*, to whom perhaps *Augustus* ow'd so much of his Prosperity in establishing the Empire, was both *Poet* and *Patron*; and *Richlieu*, the greatest Statesman since him, did not only declare openly for it, and dispensed his Favours in an eminent Degree, on the Sons of Art, but discovered his Ambition to be one of them himself.

This, I hope, will not make me look little, by my Zeal for *Poetry*, tho' the great Men of our Nation have never yet given a Proof of their Politicks, by a Care of this Mother of all Arts and Sciences. But when we have seen any one of these *British* Statesmen excel *Mæcenas* and *Richlieu*, in their Administration, we may then have some Excuse to think them more in the right; but till then, give me Leave to entertain meaner Thoughts of their Intellects, and greater, of the Excellence of *Poetry*, and say with a noble Peer, at the Beginning of his *Essay on Poetry*.

Of Things, in which Mankind do most excel,
Nature's chief Master-Piece is Writing well.
Among those fam'd Remains of ancient Time,
Soul-moving Poetry shines most sublime.
No Sort of Work requires so nice a Touch,
And finish'd well, no Thing delights so much.

Tho' these Lines are no more than the Introduction to his Grace's following admirable Rules, yet, I cannot

not pass them over, without observing that they contain the best Praise of Poesy.

In all the Benefits of the *animal Life*, perhaps our Share with the brute Beasts, Birds, Fish, Reptiles, and Insects, may be well thought a younger Brother's Portion, the Senses of many of them being manifestly more strong, as the Smell in some, the Eyes in others, the Taste in a third, the Hearing in a fourth, and the Feeling in a fifth. Discourse is common to the most barbarous, and most polite of People; the *Scythians* and *Athenians*; the *Getæ* and the *Romans*; the *Learned* and *Unlearned*. By Writing is the Commerce and Correspondence of Nations begot, and preserv'd, the Curse of *Babel* almost revers'd: For, by Writing, are the several Languages of the World obtain'd and understood. From Writing, arise all the charming Train of *Arts* and *Sciences*, which more particularly distinguish Man from the brute Creation, exalting some Men so far above others, as to make them a Sort of Angelick Species of themselves, and superior to the rest of Mankind. For

Man differs more from Man, than Man from Beast.

If all this be owing to *Writing*, as most certainly it is, how much more is due to *Writing well?* It is that which gives *Immortality* to *Mortal Men*, and has made States and Kingdoms exist in History, which for many Ages have been involv'd in that common Ruin to which all sublunary things are subject.

If the Governing of Nations be the most noble Science that Man is capable of, as the incomparable *Virgil* seems to hint, when he preferr'd the *Roman* Art of Government to all the Sciences of *Greece*.

Let others better mould the running Mass
Of Metals, and inform the breathing Brass,
And soften into Flesh a Marble Face.

Plead

Plead better at the Bar, deſcribe the Skies,
And when the Stars deſcend, and when ariſe:
But Rome, 'tis thine alone with awful Sway,
To rule Mankind, and make the World obey.
Dryd. Virg.

If, I ſay, the Governing of Nations be the moſt noble Science, certainly, *Writing well* is of the higheſt Value, ſince from thence the Stateſman draws his Capacity of weighing preſent Occurrences with paſt, and making his Judgment by former Events, on the like Occaſions, in his own Time. All the Laws of Religion and Morality owe themſelves to Writing. 'Tis true *Pythagoras*, and the *Britiſh* and *Gauliſh Druids* truſted all to oral Tradition. But beſide a thouſand obvious Inconveniencies in that extreamly liable to Frauds and Impoſitions, we find all their Learning bury'd, or at leaſt ſo far loſt, that we have nothing but blind and uncertain Conjecture to help us to any Part of it, and thoſe gathered by thoſe Ancients who have endeavoured to recover by Writing, what they loſt by oral Tradition.

The *Chineſe* have been look'd upon as a polite People, ever ſince they have been diſcovered; and we find that Writing has always been in ſuch Eſteem among them, that the King claims the Honour and Reputation of whatever Book is publiſhed in his Reign, as the moſt valuable Jewel of his Crown. The two firſt Lines are ſufficiently proved by what is ſaid, and I doubt not, but that the two next Lines will ſoon be as evidently founded on Reaſon.

If we were to form our Notions and Eſteem of Poetry, by the Writings of the *Rimeſters* of the Times, this would ſeem no common Paradox; becauſe there can be nothing more trifling and mean: But if we look into the Nature of the thing, as well as the Performances of the Ancients, the Knot of the Aſſertion, will be ſoon unty'd, and it will appear a plain

and

evident Truth; for there is nothing above the on, nothing great and immortal, or frail and fa- g, beneath her Orb, which is not the Subject of s *Divine Art*, and has been handled with Beauty by ne of the Poets. It muſt be a Poet above the com- n Rank, to give in an Eſteem equal to its Merit, t only *Alexander*, *Cæſar*, *Scipio*, but even the ſurly l gloomy *Marius* expreſs'd no common Value for it. For a Poet to be accompliſh'd, he muſt have a mperament of Fire and Fancy, of Strength and eetneſs, of Penetration and Deſteney; and he muſt ve a ſovereign Eloquence, and a profound Capaci- In ſhort, the Civilizing of Mankind was one of e publick Benefits of Poetry; the firſt Letters, and e firſt religious Principle being written in Verſe.

Such as of old wiſe Bards employ'd, to make
Unpoliſh'd Men their wild Retreats forſake;
Law-giving Heroes fam'd for taming Brutes,
And raiſing Cities with their charming Lutes:
For modeſt Minds with Harmony are caught,
And civil Life was by the Muſes taught.

It was by *Homer*'s Poems, that all the Worthies of tiquity were form'd; from him the Sovereigns ok the firſt Platform of the Laws they gave; the unders of Monarchies and Commonwealths took e Models of their Polities; in him the Philoſo- ers found the Principles of the Morality which ey have taught the People; from him the yſicians have ſtudied Diſeaſes and their Cures; tronomers have learnt the Knowledge of the Hea- ns, and Geometricians that of the Earth; Kings d Princes the Art of Governing, and Generals how form a Battle, and encamp an Army, and to be- ge a Town, and gain a Victory.

This Art ſhews its Excellency above all others, in is, that all other Arts and Sciences can be learnt, but

but this is only the Gift of Heaven. 'Tis true, greateſt Genius is to be regulated, and improved Art; but all the Art in the World cannot make a Poet whom Nature has not furniſhed with a nius. It differs likewiſe in this from all other that a Mediocrity is never allow'd in Poetry, no ſecond Place; nor any *Medium* between the beſt the worſt. The Reaſon of this ſeems to be this, it compaſſes its End by Pleaſure; but that not be to be found in a Mediocrity, where there is no F no Force, no Tranſport, no divine Enthuſiaſm, i not capable of attaining its End.

To rail at this divine Art indeed, would, in learned be the higheſt Ingratitude, ſince the high *Ignorance* receiv'd its firſt Light from *Poeſy*, in wh agreeable Dawn the Eyes of Reaſon, by little and tle, grew ſtronger, and more able to arrive at Kno ledge, more robuſt. Let learned *Greece* ſhew me Book before *Muſæus*, *Heſiod*, and *Homer*, all Poe nor were there any Writers before them, but *Orphe Linus*, and other Poets, who are juſtly therefore ſty the Fathers of all Learning. Since they were Perſons, who by the Charms of their Verſes, rende Knowledge admirable and deſirable to the rude, cultivated Wits of thoſe Nations; it was the Poli ing and Civilizing of them, that gave Riſe to fabulous Power of *Amphion's* Lute, and *Orphe* Lyre.

Learning firſt appeared at *Rome* under the Po *Livius Andronicus*, and *Ennius*; and among the *Italia* on the Reſurrection of Arts, under *Dante*, *Bocc* and *Petrarch*; and in *England*, under *Gower* and *Ch cer*. In *Greece*, the firſt *Philoſophers* were Poets, *Tha Empedocles*, and *Parmenides*, ſung their Natural Phi ſophy in Verſe; *Pythagoras*, *Phocides*, *Morality*; *T teus*, *War*; *Solon*, *Law*, and Political Inſtitutio this wiſe *Law-giver* having himſelf written in Ve the Story of the *Atlantic* Iſland, which *Plato* co

u'd. Nay, I may with Juſtice obſerve, that all the eſign, Deſcriptions of the Perſons, Place of Meet- g, and the like, the Foundations of *Plato*'s Dia- gues are Poetry. It is farther obſervable, that, in l Nations where Learning is not yet admitted, *Poe-* is, as among the *Turks*, who have no other Stu- ies but their Divinity and Poetry. We find among e *Iriſh* and the *Indians*, they have their Poets, who ng the Deeds and Praiſes of their Anceſtors, and of eir Gods. Whence it ſeems to me very probable, at if ever Learning come in among them, it will introduc'd by *Poetry*; for till they find a Pleaſure the Exerciſe of the Mind, great Promiſes of large nowledge can have but little Effect on thoſe who not know the Fruits of Knowledge. As our old itons had their Bards, ſo thro' all the Conqueſts of mans, *Saxons*, *Danes*, and *Normans* (ſome of whom deavoured to extirpate all Footſteps of Learning om among them) do the Remains of their Poets laſt this Day.

All the Civility and Politeneſs of *Europe*, deriving ſelf from the *Romans* and the *Greeks*: let us conſider ith what Names, and Titles of Dignity, they have onour'd this Art. The *Romans* gave the *Poets* the ame of *Prophets*, as if they were immediately in- ir'd by Heaven. And the *Greeks* went higher; for e very Word *Poet* ſignifies a *Maker or Creator*.

But ſince, Madam, you have granted, that there e ſome Arts allowable to Men of Senſe, and good len; let us conſider the Excellence of *Poetry* in its im and End, in Compariſon of that of other rts.

All Arts make Nature their principal Object. Thus *ſtronomy* applys it ſelf to the Obſervation of the ars, and thence ſets down the Order; Nature ob- rves in their ſeveral Poſitions and Revolutions; e *Geometricians*, and *Arithmeticians*, in their ſeveral rts of Quantities and Numbers: The *Muſician* diſ-

covers what Tones agree with each other in Order, to produce that admirable Harmony which affects by our Hearing, our Hearts and all our Faculties. From the Conſideration of Nature does the *Natural Philoſopher* draw his Name; and the *Moral Philoſopher* conſiders and diſcourſes on the Virtues, Vices, Paſſions, and Habits of the Human Mind; *follow Nature therein*, ſays he, *and thou canſt not err.* The *Grammarian* teaches the Rules of Speech; and the *Rhetorician*, and *Logician*, conſider what will ſooneſt move, and perſuade, of all which they give us artificial Rules. *Metaphyſician* weighs the Nature of Mens Bodies; and whatever is helpful or hurtful to it. Tho' the *other Phyſician* conſiders ſecond or abſtract Notions, yet does he build on the Depth of Nature.

Only the *Poet*, rais'd aloft by the Vigour of his own Invention, gives us in effect another *Nature*, in making Things either better than *Nature* brings them forth, or quite new Forms of ſuch as were never in Nature, as the *Heroes*, *Demi-Gods*, *Cyclops*, *Chymera's*, *Furies*, and the like; in all which notwithſtanding he goes Hand in Hand with *Nature* it ſelf. Nature never adorn'd the Earth in ſo rich and charming a Dreſs as ſeveral of the *Poets* have done.

But to paſs over theſe inferior Things, and go to *Man*, for whom, as all other Things are, ſo in him is her utmoſt Cunning and Skill employ'd. Has Nature therefore ever in Reality brought forth ſo true a Lover as *Theagenes*, ſo conſtant a Friend as *Pylades*; ſo valiant a Man as *Achilles*, *Hercules*, *Orlando*; ſo bright a Prince as *Xenophon's Cyrus*; or ſo excellent a Man in all Moral Virtues as *Virgil's Æneas*? Let it not here be objected, that as the Works of Nature are real, ſo thoſe of the *Poet*, are only Imitation or Fiction: Every Man of Underſtanding knows, that the Skill of the Artificer ſtands in the Idea, or Preconception of the Work, and not in the Work it ſelf. Now that the *Poet* has that *Idea*, is moſt evident from his

his delivering and conveying it to others in that ſame Excellence, in which he had fram'd an Image of it in his Mind; nor is this ſetting forth, Delivery, or Conveyance of it to others wholly Imaginative; but it ſo far works ſubſtantially, not only to make a *Cyrus* (which had been but a particular Excellence, and what Nature might have done) but to beſtow a *Cyrus* on the World, who ſhou'd make many *Cyrus's*, if they will truly learn and conſider how that *Poet*, or *Maker*, made him. Nor let any one think the Compariſon to be preſumptious to put the higheſt Point of Man's Wit in Ballance with the Efficacy of Nature; but rather to give due Honour to the *Maker* of our *Poet*, who having made Man in his own Likeneſs, ſet him beyond, and over all the Works of that *Second Nature*, which he ſhews in nothing ſo much as in *Poetry*, when with the Force of a Divine Breath, he brings forth Things which ſurpaſs what he does, which I think is no ſmall Argument to the incredulous of that firſt accurſed Fall of *Adam*, ſince our Wit thus rais'd up by *Poetry*, makes us know what *Perfection* is, and yet our *Will's* affected by that Fall, keep us from reaching up to the Practice of it.

From all this, it ſeems, that I may inſiſt to have it granted me, that the *Grecians* had very good Reaſon to give the *Poet* the Name above all other Names in Learning.

But not to dwell on this Praiſe of *Poetry*, which is deriv'd only from its *Name*, a Deſcription or Definition of the Art, which no body can deny, will furniſh a ſufficient *Eulogy*. *Poetry is*, therefore, *an Art of Imitating*, that is to ſay, of *Repreſenting*, Counterfeiting, or Figuring out; to ſpeak metaphorically, it is a *Speaking Picture*, directed to *teach*, and, at the ſame time, to *delight*. Of this there have been three general Kinds; the chief, both in Antiquity and in Excellence, was that by which the *Poets* did

imitate or repreſent to us the Eternal Excellences of *God*, as *David* in his *Pſalms*; *Solomon* in his *Canticles*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, and *Proverbs*; *Moſes* and *Deborah* in their Hymns, and the Writer of the Book of *Job*. Of this Kind (tho' in a wrong and miſtaken Divinity) were *Orpheus*, *Amphion*, *Homer* in his Hymns, the *Secular Verſes* of the *Romans*, and many others both *Greeks* and *Romans*.

The ſecond Kind is in Philoſophy, either *Moral*, as *Phocylides*, *Cato*, *Theognis*; or natural, as *Lucretius* and *Virgil's Georgicks*; or *Aſtronomical*, as *Manilius* and *Pontanus*; or *Hiſtorical*, as *Lucan*. But whether theſe may be juſtly term'd Poets, or not, I ſhall leave to the Deciſion of the *Grammarians*, and go to the third, who on all Hands, are confeſs'd to be right, or true *Poets*.

Between theſe and the ſecond, there is the ſame Difference, as between the meaner Painters, who only draw ſuch Faces as fit to them, and the more excellent, or Hiſtorical Painters, who being only directed by their Genius, give you in Colours what is moſt agreeable to the Eye, to view; as the conſtant, tho' lamenting Look of *Lucretia*, when, in her ſelf, ſhe puniſh'd the Crime of another; in which he does not draw *Lucretia*, whom he never ſaw, but the outward Beauty of ſuch a Virtue. For theſe third Sort are the *Poets*, who imitate to teach and delight, and, in this Imitation, borrow not any thing of what is, has been, or ſhall be, but delineate what may, or ſhould be. Theſe indeed are *Prophets*, or *Poets*, in the original Senſe of the Name, as making only to imitate, and imitating only to inſtruct and delight, to move Mens Inclinations to aſſume that Goodneſs to which they are mov'd; which being the nobleſt Aim to which any Learning was ever directed, yet has it not eſcap'd the Abuſe, and railing Aſperſions of ſome People.

These are ſubdivided into *Heroic*, *Lyric*, *Tragic*, *Comic*, *Satyric*, *Elegiac*, *Paſtoral*, and ſome others; ſome named from the Matter, or Subject; ſome from the Sort of Verſe (as, *Iambick*) ſome from the *Poet*, (as *Alcaic*) and the like.

Tho' the Poets have generally dreſs'd their Subjects in ſome Sort of Verſe, or other, yet is not Verſe abſolutely eſſential to *Poetry*. *Xenophon*, *Plato*, *Heliodorus*, were Poets, tho' they did not write in Verſe: For 'tis not the Verſe, but the Framing admirable Images of Virtues, Vices, or whatever elſe affords that delightful Inſtruction, which diſtinguiſhes, and gives a Right to the Name of *Poet*. The *Poets* have choſen Verſe indeed, that they might excel all other Arts in the Manner, as well as in the Matter of their Study; weighing each Syllable of each Word by a juſt an exact Proportion, to make them bear ſome Analogy to the Nature and Dignity of the Subject.

This Refining of the Wit, this Enriching of the Memory, this Enabling of the Judgment, and Enlarging of the Fancy, which we commonly call Learning, under what Name ſoever, or to whatever Aim directed, by its final End, is to draw, and exalt us to as great a Perfection, as the preſent Degeneracy of our Nature is capable of.

This, according to the various Inclinations of Men, guided every one to the Choice of ſome particular Art or Science; as, to *Aſtronomy*, *Phyſicks*, *Metaphyſicks*, *Mathematicks*, and the like, Knowledge being the End and Aim of all and each Particular. On a View of all theſe, *Proof*, the Over-ruler of Opinions, has made it evident, that all theſe are but what we may call *Serving*, or *Subſervient* Sciences; which, as they have a private End in themſelves, ſo are they all ſubjected to the higheſt End of the chief, I may ſay, Miſtreſs Knowledge, or Science, the *Knowledge of a Mans ſelf*, in regard of his Actions, both in his *Domeſtick* and *Political* Manners, its End being to do

well, as much or more, than to know well; ſo that the Aim of all valuable Learning in this World, being virtuous *Actions*, thoſe Arts which conduce moſt to the bringing forth that Fruit, have, beyond Controverſy, the juſteſt and moſt rightful Pretence to be the Sovereigns over all the reſt. And I doubt not to make it appear, that the *Poet*'s Performance does therefore merit this Preheminence above all other Writings that have yet appeared in the World.

The *Moral Philoſopher* ſets out his Plea in this Conteſt, by demanding, Whether it be poſſible to find any Path more directly tending to Virtue, than the Art he teaches, which inſtructs us what Virtue is, and that not only by delivering its very Being, its Cauſes and Effects, but alſo by making known, and diſcovering its Enemy Vice, which muſt be deſtroy'd, and its uneaſy Servant Paſſion, that muſt be maſter'd, diſcourſing upon its Generals and Particulars; laſtly, by ſetting down in a plain and evident Manner, how it extends it ſelf out of the Limits of Man's little World (of Himſelf) firſt to the Government of Families, and then to the Support of Publick Society.

But then the *Hiſtorian* denies that any Man is comparable to him for teaching Virtue, and virtuous Actions. He tells you, That he is the *Witneſs of Time, the Light of Truth, the Life of Memory*, and *the Inſtructor of Life*. Diſputative Virtue is, indeed, ſays he, taught by the Philoſopher, whereas, I teach that which is Active. His Virtue may be excellent in the ſecure Commonwealth of *Plato*, far from Danger; but I ſhew her in the honourable Face of the Battles of *Marathon, Pharſalia, Poictiers, Agencourt, Blenheim, Ramilly*; he teaches Virtue by certain abſtract Conſiderations, but I only bid you follow the Footſteps of thoſe who went before you.

Between theſe two Candidates for this ſupream Honour in the Arts, whom can we chuſe for Moderator? Unleſs we fix on the *Poet*, who, in my Opinion, may

carry it from them both, and much more from all the ſubſervient Sciences; for, if he excel the *Moral Philoſopher*, and the *Hiſtorian*, there is none that can pretend to be his Equal. As for the *Divine*, we muſt always except him, whoſe Aim and Doctrine is, or ought to be, Eternity. But as for the *Lawyer*, he endeavours not to make People good, but to hinder their Wickedneſs from being hurtful to others, not at all troubling himſelf, whether a Man be good, provided he be a good Citizen. Theſe four are all that deal in the Conſideration of Mens *Manners*: which being the ſupreme Knowledge, thoſe who beſt regulate them, deſerve the higheſt Commendation.

The *Philoſopher* therefore, and the *Hiſtorian*, aim at eſtabliſhing their Preheminence, the firſt by *Precept*, and the latter by *Example*; but neither of them having both, they are both defective. The *Philoſopher*, for Want of *Example*, is obſcure, and almoſt uſeleſs; the *Hiſtorian*, for Want of the *Precept*, is, by that Means ſo confin'd, not to what *ſhou'd be*, but to what *is*; that is, to the *particular* Truth of Things, and not to the *general* Reaſon of them, that his Example draws no neceſſary Conſequence, and yields therefore a Doctrine wholly without Fruit or Advantage; but the unequal'd *Poet* performs both: For of whatever the Philoſopher ſays ſhould be done, he gives you a perfect Picture in ſome one, by whom he preſuppoſes that it was done, by that Means joining the *Precept* and *Example*. He gives, I ſay, a perfect Picture, ſetting before the Mind, an Image of that of which the *Philoſopher* only gives a Deſcription, in bare and dry Words, which does neither ſtrike, pierce, nor poſſeſs the Soul, as the Poet does.

Tully (and ſome others) have taken a great deal of Pains to ſhew the Force that the Love of our Country has upon us, but we find that much more ſenſibly, when we hear *Anchiſes* in the midſt of the Flames of *Troy*, or *Ulyſſes* in the Fulneſs of *Calipſo*'s Delights,

crying for his barren Rock of *Ithaca*. The ſame may be ſaid of all the other Paſſions repreſented by the *Poets*; whether the Anger of *Ajax* in *Sophocles*, the Wiſdom and Temperance of *Ulyſſes*, and the Valour of *Achilles* in *Homer*; the Friendſhip of *Niſus* and *Euryalus* in *Virgil*, and the like. If any of theſe Poetical Images of Perſons or Things be leſs perfect in others, that is the Fault of the Poet, and not of the Art. For the Queſtion is, whether the feign'd *Images* of *Poetry*, or the regular Inſtruction of Philoſophy, has the greater Force in Teaching. There is no doubt, but that our *Saviour* could as well have given the *Moral* Common Places of *Uncharitableneſs* and *Humbleneſs*, as the divine Narration of the *Rich Man* and *Lazarus*; and of Diſobedience and Mercy, as, that heavenly Diſcourſe of the *Prodigal Son*, and the generous Father, had he not ſeen, by his thorough-ſearching Wiſdom, that the State of the *Rich Man's* burning in *Hell*, and of *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Boſom, wou'd with greater Conſtancy and Efficacy dwell in the Memory and Judgment; and theſe, by Divines, are look'd on to be *inſtructing Parables*, and not Hiſtories of Facts. But, in ſhort, ſhou'd we allow, that the *Philoſopher* teaches, yet it muſt be owned, that he teaches with ſome Obſcurity, ſo that the learned alone can underſtand him; that is to ſay, he teaches thoſe who are already taught.

On the other Side, the *Poet* is obvious to every Underſtanding, and is indeed the only true popular *Philoſopher*, of which *Æſop's* Tales are a Proof beyond Contradiction.

But then 'tis urg'd, that *Hiſtory* offers true Images to the Mind, that is, the Images of Matters of Fact, ſuch as were really perform'd, and not ſuch as are only ſuppos'd to have been done. *Ariſtotle* decides this Queſtion, when he tells us, that *Poetry* is more *Philoſophical* and ingenious, than *Hiſtory*, becauſe *Poetry* deals in the *Univerſal*, or *General*, and *Hiſtory* in the

he *Particular*. Now, ſays he, the *Univerſal*, or *Gen-*
al, conſiders what is fit to be ſaid or done, either in *Probability* or *Neceſſity*, to which the *Poet* has Regard in the Names he impoſes; whereas, the *Particular* only ſhews, that *Alcibiades*, *Timon*, or any one certain Perſon beſides did, ſaid, or ſuffer'd this or that. If he *Poet* diſcharge his Office with a juſt Maſtery, he will ſhew you in *Tantalus* and *Atreus*, nothing that is not to be avoided; In *Cyrus*, *Æneas*, *Ulyſſes*, nothing but what is to be embrac'd, and follow'd: Whereas, he *Hiſtorian* being obliged to repreſent things as they really were, cannot give us a perfect Pattern, without being Poetical. For in the Hiſtorical Portraicts of *Alexander*, and *Scipio* himſelf, he muſt ſhew us Actions, of which ſome merit our Approbation, and ſome our Condemnation; ſo that every Reader's Diſcretion is left to judge of what is to be followed, and what not, which is not at all inform'd or directed by your reading *Quintus Curtius*, or any other *Hiſtorian*.

But you may ſtill, perhaps, inſiſt, that tho' the *Poet* muſt be allowed the Prehemineence in the *General*; yet, that the *Hiſtorian* gives you a particular Example by what was once done, what we are to follow: Yet, that is no more a Conſequence, than that it ſhould rain to day, becauſe it rained yeſterday. But if it be granted, that *Example* only informs and teaches us, by the Rules of Veriſimilitude and Reaſon, the *Poet* ſo far excels the *Hiſtorian*, as he is oblig'd to frame his Example by that which is moſt reaſonable, be it in Martial, Political, or Private Affairs; but the *Hiſtorian* is confin'd often to admit what is generally called Fortune, which over-rules the moſt conſummate Wiſdom. After he muſt tell us Events, of which he can aſſign no Cauſe, or if he do adventure to give us any, it muſt be by invading the Province, and aſſuming the Character of the *Poet*. But the Events of *Hiſtory* are far from affording Inſtruction; for by that we ſee the valiant *Miltiades* rot

in his Fetters, a just *Phocion*, and an admirable *Socrates* put to Death, like Traitors; the cruel *Severus* liv prosperously; the excellent *Severus* miserably murd red; *Sylla* and *Marius* dying in their Beds, *Pompey* an *Cicero* slain by Rascals; *Cato* compell'd to kill himself and Rebel *Cæsar* so prosperous, that his Name is yet i the highest Veneration; *Periander*, *Phalaris*, *Dionysius* and many more, who prosper'd well enough in thei abominable Injustice and Usurpation.

I conclude therefore, that the *Poet* excels the *Histo rian*, not only in furnishing the Mind with Know ledge which is a *Conditional Good*, but in setting forward on its Way, to the arriving at that whic justly deserves the Name of a *Real Good*; which b ing a Moving the Heart to the Doing well plainly, think, places the Crown of Sovereignty on the *Poe* Head, not only over the *Historian*, but also over th *Philosopher*.

But suppose we grant, *which we never shall*, that th *Philosopher*, by the Method in his Speculations, i structs more than the *Poet*! yet, certainly, there is n Man that will so much as pretend to compare him the *Poet*, for *Moving*; and that this *Moving*, which i in *Poetry*, is of a more exalted and high Degree, tha plain Teaching, will appear by this, that it is bo the Cause, and the Effect of Teaching: For wh would apply himself to be taught, if he were n mov'd by the Desire of gaining Knowledge? For is the Practice, not the Speculation, that is the m valuable Fruit of Learning; and how can you ev come at the Practice, if you are not mov'd to i And indeed, to be touch'd with the Doctrine of t *Philosophers*, you must already have overcome yo Passions, that is, you must be a perfect *Philosopher* the Practice, before you can arrive at the Specul tion. But the chief and most important Difficul is to be mov'd to do, or put in Act what we kno and to be mov'd with a Desire of knowing. And

this, is *Poetry* the Monarch of all Sciences; for that does not only ſhew the Way, but gives ſo ſweet and inviting a Proſpect into that Way, as will draw any Man with an irreſiſtible Attraction, to enter into it.

The *Poet* begins not with obſcure Definitions, the Chicanry of Diſtinctions, and the like Embaraſsments of the Schools; but he approaches you in Words ſet in delightful Proportion, either attended by, or prepared for, the enchanting Skill of Muſick, and a Tale, whoſe Charms are ſo extenſive, ſo univerſal, that it ties both the Child and the Old Man, Youth and Age, both Sexes, and all Degrees, from the Prince to the Peaſant, with ſo inviolable an Attachment, that they forſake all other Delights to liſten to that; and pretending to no more than it does perform, avows its End, Aim, and Intent, to be the Winning of the Mind from Wickedneſs to Virtue, by the ſame Means that we uſe with Children, to make them take ſalutiferous and healing Druggs and Medicines, by hiding or diſguiſing them in ſomething elſe which has a Taſte more agreeable to the Palate: Whereas, if we ſhould begin our Courſe with them, by a Lecture of the Nature of *Aloes* or *Rhubarb*, it might improve their Knowledge of them, but render them ſo nauſeous, that they wou'd ſooner take their Phyſick in at their Ears, than Mouths.

Thus it is with Men (too generally averſe to wholeſome Counſels) they will hear with Satisfaction and Pleaſure, nay, perhaps with Tranſport, the Tales of *Hercules*, *Achilles*, *Cyrus*, *Æneas*, and the like, and theſe they cannot hear, without hearing at the ſame Time, the Deſcription of *Wiſdom*, *Valour*, *Juſtice*, &c. which, if they had been treated as barely, that is, Philoſophically, they wou'd begin ſoon to yawn, and at laſt declare, that by this Means they were brought again to School.

That *Imitation* of which *Poetry* is compoſed, has the moſt Convenience to Nature, of all others. Who reads

reads of *Æneas* carrying his aged Father *Anchiſes* on his Shoulders, through the Flames of *Troy*, but wiſhes it were his own Fate to perform ſo pious and good an Action? Men are ſurpriz'd into the Love of Virtue, and ſtrangely mov'd by poetical Repreſentations, even when their Nature is the moſt corrupt. I ſhall give but two Inſtances of this Truth, out of many; the firſt, of a mutinous People, than which, generally ſpeaking, nothing is more outrageous.

Menenius Agrippa, when the whole People of *Rome* had made a Seceſſion, and divided themſelves entirely from the *Senate*, whence the immediate Ruin of that State muſt have enſued, comes not out to the Multitude with his Oratory (which yet has had wonderful Effects on ſuch an Audience) nor does he offer Philoſophical Maxims and Definitions, but like a *Poet*, comes cloſer, and more familiarly to them; tells them a Tale, that there was a Time when all the Parts of the Body rebelled againſt the Stomach, which they thought devour'd the Fruit of all their Labours, and ſo they reſolv'd they would let ſo unprofitable a Servant ſtarve. In ſhort (for this Tale is ſufficiently known) by puniſhing the Stomach, they plagu'd themſelves.

This being told, and juſtly apply'd by him, produced ſuch an Effect in the People, as no Hiſtory (that ever I read) gives us any Inſtance produc'd by meer Words, but at this Time; or ſo ſudden and good an Alteration; for, upon reaſonable Conditions, a perfect Reconciliation follow'd between the Fathers and the Populace.

The ſecond Example of this Power of *Fable*, I ſhall give you from the *Holy Scriptures*, and that is of *Nathan* the Prophet. When *David* had ſo far forſaken God, as to confirm *Adultery* with *Murther*; when *Nathan* was to do the tendereſt Office of a Friend, in laying his Fault before his Eyes, being ſent by God, to call again ſo choſen a Servant, how does the Pro-

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phet perform it? But by telling a Tale of a Man whoſe beloved Lamb was barbarouſly taken from his Boſom. It is ſo very moving, that I am ſure it can't be diſagreeable to repeat it, as it lies in the Bible. *There were two Men in one City* (ſaid *Nathan*) *the one rich, and the other poor, The rich Man had exceeding many Flock and Herds; but the poor Man had nothing but one Ewe-Lamb, which he had bought and nouriſhed up, and it grew up together with him and his Children, it did eat of his own Meat, and drank of his own Cup, and lay in his Boſom; and it was to him as a Daughter. And there came a Traveller unto the rich Man, and he ſpared to take of his own Flock, and his own Herd, to dreſs for the Way-faring Man that was come unto him, but took the poor Man's Lamb, and dreſſed it for the Man that was come to him.*

This is the admirable *Parable*, and how did it move *David* to pronounce his own Judgment? *And David's Anger was greatly kindled againſt the Man, and he ſaid to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the Man that has done this thing, ſhall ſurely die; and he ſhall reſtore the Lamb fourfold, becauſe he did this thing, and becauſe he had no Pity.*

In ſhort, the whole Conſequence of this is ſo very pathetick, that it is with Reluctance I go not thro' it, which its being ſo well known to every *Chriſtian*, will only excuſe.

The Application is moſt divinely true, but the Diſcourſe it ſelf is feign'd, and yet made *David*, as in a Glaſs, ſee his own Guilt, as his heavenly Pſalm of *Mercy* is a Proof.

Hence it is plain by Examples and Reaſon, that *Poetry* draws the Mind with Delight, more than any other Art whatſoever; whence we may conclude, that as Virtue is the moſt worthy Aim of all valuable Learning, ſo the *Poet* and *Poetry* teaching this in the moſt familiar, and moving the Heart of Man towards it, in a ſovereign Manner, muſt be allow'd to be the moſt excellent Inſtructor and Inſtruction.

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But to deſcend from the *General* to *Particulars*. Let us examine which Part, or Denomination of *Poetry* is juſtly condemned. Do you diſlike the *Paſtoral* Poem? Is the poor Pipe diſdain'd, which, inſpir'd by *Meliboeus*, can ſhew the Miſery of People under hard Lords, and rav'ning Soldiers; and by that of *Tityrus*, what Happineſs is derived to the *loweſt*, from the *higheſt* Fortunes of the World. Sometimes, under the agreeable little *Tales* of Wolves and Sheep, they include the Conſideration of Wrong-doing and Patience. Sometimes does it ſhew, that Contentions for Trifles can get but a trifling Victory; where, perchance, a Man may ſee, that even *Alexander* and *Darius*, when they ſtrove for the Prize of Empire, got no other Benefit, than that thoſe who liv'd afterwards might ſay,

In vain did Thyrſis, *with unequal Skill,*
Contend with Corydon———

Or do you arraign the lamenting *Elegy*, which bewails the Weakneſs of Mankind, and the wretchedneſs of the World which gives Tears to the Aſhes of our dead Friends, and mourns the Loſs of an agreeable and faithful Conſort? Or does *Satyr* provoke your Anger for ſparing no Vice or Folly in Friend or Foe? That never leaves off till it make a Man laugh, and hate Vice; and he finds that the only way of eſcaping from being laugh'd at himſelf, is to avoid the Folly to makes others ridiculous. *Satyr*, in a pleaſant Manner, lets us feel how many Head-achs, and other Pains a Life directed by Paſſions brings us to. Or is it *Comedy* provokes your Spleen? This indeed our wretched *Play-wrights*, and *Stage-keepers*, have but too juſtly made odious in this Nation. But this is the *Abuſe*; for *Comedy* is in it ſelf an Imitation of the common Errors, and Humours of *Vulgar Life*, which it repreſents in the moſt ridiculous Manner it can,

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ſo that it is impoſſible that any *Spectator* or *Hearer* can be content to be ſuch an one in the Eye of the World. Now, as in *Geometry*, the *Oblique* Lines muſt be known, as well as the *Right*, and in *Arithmetick*, the odd, as well as the even Numbers; ſo in the Actions of our Life, he that has not had a View of the Deformity of Vice, will want a great Foil to ſet off the Beauties of Virtue. Nor is here the leaſt Truth in that Aſſertion, that Men learn the Evil by ſeeing it repreſented in that Manner, ſince there is no Man living, but by the Force and Power, that Truth has in Nature, ſooner ſees theſe Characters play their Parts, but wiſhes them in their true Place of Puniſhment, though perhaps he ſees not that he himſelf dances the ſame Meaſure; and yet to diſcover this Blindneſs and his own Faults, nothing contributes more, than theſe his own Actions repreſented untemptible and ridiculous; ſo that the juſt and right Uſe of *Comedy*, can, I think, be condemn'd by no Man.

But if *Comedy* be thus innocent, *Tragedy* is much more ſo, and deſerves your Anger much leſs. *Tragedy* opens the greateſt Wounds, and diſcovers the Ulcers that are hidden by Tiſhue. That makes Kings fear to be Tyrants, and Tyrants diſcover openly their Tyrannical Inclinations. That by ſtirring up *Fear* and *Compaſſion*, teaches the Uncertainty of this World, and on what weak Foundation the gilded Palaces of Princes are built.

Tragedy, indeed, was of old call'd the *Poem of Kings*, but by our Modern Management is become the Contempt of the *Vulgar*. The moſt excellent of our *Engliſh* Poets in that, which ſeems ſomething of this Kind, is *Shakeſpear*; but how far ſhort does he fall of the true Dignity and Excellence of *Tragedy*? The higheſt he riſes, is to the Painting of the Manners, in which he is truly admirable ſometimes, tho' he often errs. And he ſeems the more inexcuſable in his

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Neglect of the *Fable*, or Deſign, becauſe he could not be wholly ignorant of that Matter; ſince there is no doubt but he had read Sir *Philip Sidney*, who wrote his *Defence of Poeſy*, before *Shakeſpear* appeared in the World, and ſhew'd ſufficiently, the Abſurdity of the *Play-wrights* of his Time, to have inſtructed ſuch a capacious Genius as *Shakeſpear*. Nay, he ſeems condemn'd out of his own Mouth; in his Hiſtorical Plays he is convinced of the Abſurdity of rambling from Place to Place, of bringing in the Actions of the whole Lives of his Princes or Heroes, and of repreſenting the Battles of his Warriors on the Stage, and ſo ſinn'd againſt his own Conſcience. But paying all the juſt Deference we can, to this great Genius, without forſaking Truth, we muſt confeſs, that his original, and inferior Buſineſs of a Player ſunk the more excellent Duties of his aſſum'd Character of a Poet. *Money* ſeems to have been his Aim more than Reputation, and therefore he was always in a Hurry, and gave not himſelf Time to weigh the Juſtneſs of a Deſign, but only conſider'd how to ſatisfy the moſt unjudging Audience that ever was in the World, the meaneſt of the People, the very *Canaille*, who then fill'd the Theatres, and brought in the Profit to the Actors. 'Tis ſaid, that he wrote his *Merry Wives of Windſor* in a Fortnight, which is one of the beſt Deſigns he has, except the *Tempeſt*. He was by his Draught of the Manners grown popular with his Audience, and he thought it time thrown away, to ſtudy Regularity and Order, when any confus'd Stuff that came into his Head, wou'd do his Buſineſs, and fill his Houſe. And ſo by his Writing, and his Acting, he got a very conſiderable Eſtate, for thoſe Times, and his Station of Life.

Playing indeed began in this Nation, and perhaps in moſt in *Europe*, on the Revival of Learning from the *Gothic* Ignorance, with the loweſt, and very Dreggs of the People, and ſo roſe, by Degrees to thoſe

of

of the better Sort, who in *England* only, took up with the Abſurdities of the original Followers of this Art, without diſcovering any better Taſte, or Underſtanding, than the low Mob, who firſt were entertain'd by the Stage. It is, to our Shame be it ſpoken, very obſervable, that our *Britiſh* Stateſmen are the only of any Nation that pretends to ſome Degree of Politeneſs, who never yet thought the Theatre worthy their Care and Inſpection, but have too frequently left it in the abandon'd Hands of Men as eminent for their Ignorance of Art, as for their Irreligion and Devotion to their immediate Intereſt alone.

This is the Reaſon that we find no ſuch Effects of this admirable Poem of *Tragedy*, as the Accounts of the Ancients give us.

How much *Tragedy* then mov'd, we find among many other Inſtances from *Plutarch*, in the Caſe of the abominable *Alexander*, Tyrant of *Pharea*; for Tragedy drew Tears from his Eyes, and Compaſſion from his Heart, who, without Pity, had butcher'd ſo many of his Citizens, and he who ſwam, as I may ſay, in human Gore, could not reſiſt the moving Force of Tragedy; nor yet yield to the ſweet Emotion, leſt he ſhould go out of the Theatre a private Man, who enter'd it a Tyrant; and the very Player that touch'd him in ſo ſenſible a Manner, eſcap'd Death by the Remains of that Pity he had rais'd in a Breaſt that was ſo unacquainted with its Beauty. And if it produc'd no farther Good in him, it was becauſe he withdrew himſelf, nay fled out of the Theatre from that ſweet Violence that had like to have betray'd him to Virtue and Humanity.

It is not, therefore, *Tragedy*, that the Declaimers againſt the Stage miſlike, ſince *Collier* himſelf (the moſt blind and violent Scourge of the Plays, ſince the Time of *William Prynn*) allows it to be the moſt uſeful Thing that the Wit of Man can invent, for the promoting of Virtue, and Diſcouragement of

Vice;

Vice; but the modern Abuſes of it, which ought indeed to be reform'd.

Is it then the *Lyric Poetry* that diſpleaſes theſe Enemies to this Art? That which, with its well tun'd Lyre, and harmonious Voice, gives Praiſes to virtuous Deeds, and is the Reward of Active Virtue? That delivers Moral Precepts, and natural Problems? That ſometimes raiſes its Voice to the Height of the Heavens, in ſinging the Praiſes of the immortal Gods? The *Hungarians*, in all their Feſtival Meetings, have Songs of their Anceſtors Valour, as one of the chief Incitements to Courage. Songs of this Nature were made and ſung by all the *Lacedemonians*, in which the luſty Men told what they did, the old Men what they had done, and the young, growing up to Action, what they would do.

There is nothing remains to be ſpoken to, I think, but the *Epic*, or *Heroic* Poetry, againſt the Attacks of its Enemies. For who dare ſpeak againſt that which has *Achilles*, *Cyrus*, *Æneas*, and the reſt, for its Champions? A Poem that does not only teach and lead to a Truth, but teaches and moves us to the moſt high and excellent Truth; that makes Magnanimity and Juſtice ſhine through the Miſts of our Fear, and the Clouds of our Deſires. And ſince *Horace* has left it for a Maxim, that *Homer* teaches what is honourable and what is uſeful or profitable, better than *Chriſippus* or *Crantor*, that is, more efficaciouſly, than Philoſophy it ſelf.

Since therefore *Poetry* is the moſt ancient of all human Learning, and that all others have taken their Riſe and Beginning from that; ſince it is ſo univerſal, that no learned and polite Nation ever deſpiſed it; and that there is no Nation ſo barbarous, as to be entirely without it; ſince both the *Greeks* and *Romans* have given ſuch divine Names to it; ſince neither its Deſcriptions nor End contain any thing that is evil, the Art it ſelf cannot contain any thing

hat is evil. Since its Effects are ſo good, as not only o teach us Goodneſs, but to give us Delight in the earning of it; ſince the Poet excels the Moral Phiſopher and the Hiſtorian; ſince the Holy Scriptures ave whole Parts of them *Poetical*; and ſince even ur Saviour *Chriſt* himſelf vouchſaf'd to uſe the Flowrs, nay, the Soul and Life of *Poetry*; ſince 'tis not nly in the *General*, but in all its Parts, commenable, admirable, certainly you muſt always allow me, that the Laurel Crown due to the *Victor*'s Brow, loes of all Manner of learned Men, belong to the *Poet*.

But to come to the moſt important Objections to *Poetry*, very falſly grounded. *Firſt*, It is urged, that here are many more fruitful *Arts* and *Sciences* worthy our Knowledge and Application, beyond this of *Poetry*. *Secondly*, That it is the Mother of *Lies*. *Thirdly*, That it is the *Nurſe of Abuſe*, infeſting us with many peſtilent Deſires; drawing with her *Syren* Notes, our frail Minds and Inclinations to *Vices*; for which *Comedy* is chiefly condemned. 'Tis farther urged, that *Chaucer* ſays, that before *Boors* had ſoften'd us, we were full of *Courage*, and given to Martial Exerciſes, the Pillars of *Manlike Liberty*; and not lull'd aſleep in *Shady Idleneſs*, and *Poetical Paſtimes*; And *Laſtly*, and chiefly, they cry out, that *Plato* baniſh'd the Poets his *Commonwealth*.

To the *Firſt*, As *Poetry* has been already prov'd to be the moſt conducive to *Virtue*, it muſt be the moſt valuable Learning, and by Conſequence, the moſt worthy of our Time and our Study. As to the *Second*, it is, I think, ſelf-evident, that the Poet is the leaſt a Lyar of the Profeſſor of any Art whatever; nay, that he cannot, as a *Poet*, be a *Lyar*, if he wou'd. All other Arts cannot, in many things, eſcape the Imputation of *Falſhood*; but the *Poet* affirming nothing, can never *lye*. For, as I take it, to *lye*, is to affirm that to be, which is not; but the

Poet,

Poet, from the firſt Opening of his Poem, invokes his Muſe to inſpire him with a good *Invention*, not endeavouring to tell you, What is, or is not, but what ſhou'd, or ſhou'd not be: And therefore, tho' his Narration conſiſt in things not true in Fact; yet, because he does not tell them as true, he can with no Manner of Juſtice be ſaid to *lie*: For by that Rule we muſt ſay, that *Nathan* told *David* a *Lye*. Thus certainly, there is no Man ſo fooliſhly ſtupid, as to accuſe *Æſop* of *Lying*, in his Tales of the Beaſts, Birds and the like. As for the *Poets* uſing particular Names to make their Narrations look like Truth, it contains no more of Falſhood, than the *Lawyers* adding the Names of *John a Nokes*, and *John a Stiles*, when they are putting their *Caſes*.

The *third* Objection is, How much it abuſes, and debauches Mens Wit, inveigling them to *Wantonneſs* and *luſtful Amours*; for that is, the principal, if not only *Abuſe*, that I can find inſiſted on, with any Shew of Fact. That Poetry has been abus'd, is not to be deny'd, we have daily freſh Inſtances of it in the *Scriblers* of the Times; but certainly, as has been urg'd, the Abuſe of a Thing, is by no Means any Argument againſt the Uſe; nay, the more capable it is by its *right and juſt Uſe* of doing Good: And this, inſtead of leſſening the Merit of Poetry, exalts it. You may kill your Father with a Sword, and yet with a Sword you may defend your Prince and Country.

They add further, that before Poets were in Eſteem our Nation had ſet their Hearts and Delight upon Action, and not upon Imagination; rather doing Things worthy to be written, than writing Things fit to be done. But when that Time was, we cannot eaſily gueſs, ſince we have no Memoirs of things ſo ancient, which are not preceded by Poetry. But tho' this be levell'd againſt Poetry in the Words, yet it is ſhot againſt all Manner of Learning, and Reading of Books of any Kind whatſoever. This indeed, is the

rdinary Doctrine of Ignorance, and not at all worthy f a ſerious Anſwer; for of all Learning, Poetry is he leaſt liable to the Subſtance of the Objection, nce it has been the conſtant Companion of rmies and Action', inſpiring and raiſing our arlike Anceſtors to Martial Deeds. *Homer* flouiſh'd before *Greece* flouriſh'd, and from him their Men of Action deriv'd their juſt Notions of Courage, their learned Men did of Learning. *Alexander's* xample may ſerve for all, who, in all his Expeditins, took *Homer* with him, and daily read him to himate his Valour.

But *Plato* baniſh'd the Poets his *Commonwealth*. Tho' his has been ſpoken to, yet I can't paſs it over. I onfeſs, that I have a greater Eſteem for *Plato*, than or all the reſt of the Philoſophers; and for this very eaſon, that he is the moſt a Poet of any of them. ut to paſs over all Recriminations, which the Phiſophers afford in Abundance, and *Plato* in particur; give me Leave to aſk out of what *Commonwealth lato* baniſh'd the Poets? Why truly out of that, in hich he allow'd a Community of Women, and the oſeſt Songs would be of no Detriment, where a an, by Law, might have what Woman he pleaſed. nt, in ſhort, *Plato* baniſh'd them for the Abuſe; at is, for fixing the World in a falſe and erroneous otion of the Deity; for their making light Tales of at *Unſpotted Eſſence*; and therefore he would not ave the Youths depray'd by ſuch Opinions. But to is it may be moſt juſtly anſwered, That the Poets id not introduce theſe Opinions, but only imitated oſe which were already introduced and ſettled mong them. 'Tis known from the *Greek* Hiſtory, at the very *Religion* of that Time was built on maand many faſhion'd Gods, and this not taught the Poets, but imitated after their Manner. And et, you may read in *Plutarch*, of *Iſis*, *Oſiris*, and thers. The Poets perhaps followed ſuperſtitiouſly,

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the Religion of their Age and Countries, but did ev
in that better, than the Philoſophers, who by t
Fineneſs of their Reaſoning, pretending to ſhake
Superſtition, introduced Atheiſm. But *Plato* hi
ſelf gives the higheſt Praiſe to Poetry, in his Di
logue of *Ion:* He himſelf tells us, that it is an act
Inſpiration of Divine Force and Energy, beyond, a
above the Wit of Man.

But if Patrons, and Examples of the Diſciples
the Muſes would, as certainly they ought, avail
we have the greateſt that ever were in the Wor
Alexander's, *Ceſar*'s, *Scipio*'s: *Lælius*, call'd the *Ro*
Socrates, was himſelf a Poet, and aſſiſted *Terence* in
Plays, as *Socrates* had done before *Euripides*. *Socra*
ſtil'd by the Oracles, the wiſeſt of Men, put *Æſo*
Fables into Verſe.

Poetry that anciently had Kings, Emperors,
nators, great Captains, ſuch as *David*, *Adria*
Germanicus, and a Thouſand more, not only
favour it, but to be Poets; and in Times nearer
us, can preſent us for her Patrons, *Richard* I. of *E*
land, *Robert* King of *Sicily*, and *Francis* King of *Fra*
ſuch Cardinals as *Bembo* and *Bibiena*, ſuch famo
Preachers and Teachers, as *Beza*, *Melanchthon*, and t
like; is now not only left without Patrons, but ſu
Maſters in the Art, as deſerve ſuch illuſtrious Patro
That which *Martial* ſaid, has ſome Weight in it,
am apt to believe; for if we had but *Mecenas*'s, I
not doubt but we ſhould have *Virgils* ariſe; fin
without any Encouragement, we had a *Spencer* and
Milton. The Reaſon we have not Patrons, is beca
we have not had any *Alexanders*, any *Scipio*'s, a
Ceſars, any *Adrians*: For tho' we have had ma
great Captains and Conquerors; yet they have be
famous only for vanquiſhing their Enemies, and
themſelves; and to be a Patron, there muſt be
Largeneſs of Soul not very common in the Her
of our modern Times.

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The true Value of Poesy is indeed generally ſo little known, that we ſcarce ever make a true Judgment of it; for 'tis the Talent of thoſe only who are above the common Level, to value it according to its Merit; nor can any one conſider, in what Manner the Great Men of Antiquity have been affected with it, without conceiving a noble Idea of it. In ſhort, Poetry is the moſt perfect of all Arts; for the Perfection of other Arts is bounded, this of Poetry has no Limits, and to be excellent in it, a Man muſt know almoſt all things in Nature.

He muſt have a Genius extraordinary, great natural Gifts, a Wit juſt, fruitful, penetrating, ſolid, Univerſal, an Underſtanding clean and diſtinct, an Imagination neat and pleaſant, and an Elevation of Soul that depends not on Art and Study, and which is purely a Gift of Heaven, and muſt be ſuſtain'd by a lively Senſe and Vivacity, a great Judgment to conſider wiſely of things, and a Livelineſs to expreſs them with that Grace and Abundance which gives them Beauty. But as Judgment without Wit, is cold and heavy, ſo Wit without Judgment, is blind and extravagant; or, as the preſent Duke of *Buckingham* ſays it in his *Eſſay on Poetry.*

As all is Dulneſs *when the* Fancy's *bad,*
So without Judgment, Fancy *is but mad;*
And Judgment has a boundleſs Influence,
Not only in the Choice of Words, *or* Senſe;
But on the World *and* Manners, *and on* Men;
Fancy is but the Feather of the Pen:
Reaſon *is that ſubſtantial, uſeful Part,*
Which gains the Head, while t'other wins the Heart.

Thus, I hope, Madam, I have made it out, that neither my Underſtanding, Senſe, or Religion, are in Danger, by my Favour to the Muſes; ſince the End of Poetry is the Praiſe of God and Virtue, which

which it teaches in the moſt pleaſing and engagi
Manner, of any Science whatſoever; and ſince
has been protected and promoted by the wiſeſt Stat
and Stateſmen, and the greateſt Princes and Co
manders.

When *Laudon* had thus made an End: This is ſu
a Face of *Poetry* (ſaid *Euſebia*) as I never ſaw befo
an Idea of which no Body cou'd ever form from wh
we daily receive in this Kind from our moſt *tak*
Wits, who only afford us at moſt a fine Simile
two in a Poem, a Smoothneſs of Verſe, and ſom
times a Correctneſs of Language, which ſeems t
higheſt of their Ambition, and the Perfection
which they meaſure the Excellence of any Po
formance.

How came this noble Art ſo to degenerate, to
ſo vaſtly alter'd from what it was in its Origin
Appearance in the World? Eſpecially when tho
great Men, who firſt brought it into Eſteem, ha
left ſuch glorious Examples behind them for the
Succeſſors to follow, at leaſt ſo far as not to loſe Sig
of the Perfections neceſſary to a Poet?

Alas (ſaid I) the Cauſe has been in ſome me
ſure already obſerv'd, but ſince a farther Diſquiſitio
of it may compleat the Hiſtory of this Art down
our Times, with the Permiſſion of the Company,
will endeavour to give the beſt Account I can of i
from the moſt judicious, who have touch'd upon th
Subject.

I believe that *Laudon* has agreeably to Truth an
Juſtice already fix'd the Origin of *Poetry* to be of
much more ancient Date, than that of any other A
or Learning; to which I may add, that *Poetry* i
many, if not moſt Nations, preceeded the Knowled
and Uſe of Letters: At leaſt it is certain, that on th
Arrival of the *Spaniards* in *America*, they met wit
and tranſlated many Pieces of *Poetry* made by the Na
tives before they had any Letters among them. W
ma

nay reaſonably believe the ſame of the *Scythians*, *Grecians*, and *Germans*; to the laſt of which *Tacitus* llows no other Annals, and Records of Things, but what were in Verſe. But tho' we cannot come at he Time when *Poetry* began even in *Greece*; yet *Pliny* peaks it as a thing known in his Time, that *Pherecides* was the firſt who writ in Proſe in the *Greek* ongue, and he liv'd about the Time of *Cyrus*, where- *Homer*, and *Heſiod* liv'd ſome Hundreds of Years efore that Age, and *Orpheus*, *Linus*, *Muſeus*, ſome undreds of Years before them. *Solon* and *Pythagoras*, e are aſſur'd, writ all in Verſe, and they were ſomeing elder than *Cyrus*; and before them were *Archichus*, *Simonides*, *Tyrtæus*, *Sappho*, *Steſicorus*, and ſeeral other Poets famous in their Times. The ſame reported of the *Chaldeans*, *Syrians*, and *Chineſe*. And, come nearer our ſelves, among the *Weſtern Goths* our Anceſtors) the *Runnic Poetry* ſeems to have been old as their Letters; and that their *Laws*, *Moral* ecepts, Records, Religious Rites, Charms and Inntations were all in Verſe.

The Book of *Job*, whether a Tranſlation out of the aldean Tongue or not, the learned have allow'd to the moſt ancient Writing among the *Hebrews*; and think it is not controverted, but that it was writn Originally in Verſe, and was a Poem upon the bject of the Juſtice and Power of God, in Vindiion of his Providence againſt the common Arguents of Atheiſtical Men. The *Spaniſh* Tranſlation it by the *Jews* of *Ferrara*, which pretends to ren- the *Hebrew* (as Sir *William Temple* tells us) Word Word, gives us the two firſt Chapters, and the ſt from the Seventh Verſe, in Proſe, as an Hiſtorical troduction, and Concluſion of the Work, and all e reſt in Verſe, except the Tranſlations from one rt or Perſon of this Sacred Dialogue to anoer.

The Book of *Geneſis* has been lately diſcover'd b
a learned *Frenchman* to be written in Verſe, whic
with the Song of *Moſes*, after paſſing the *Red-Sea*
muſt be of the next Antiquity to *Job*.

I cann't here omit Sir *William Temple*'s Reflectio
on the Precedence of Poetry to *Proſe*, in the Uſage o
Mankind.

It may ſeem ſtrange, I confeſs (ſays he) upo
the firſt Thought, that a ſort of Stile ſo regula
and ſo difficult, ſhou'd have grown in Uſe, befo
the other ſo eaſie and ſo looſe. But if we conſid
what the firſt End of Writing was, it will appe
probable from Reaſon, as well as Experience; for t
true and general End was but the help of Memor
in preſerving that of Words and Actions, whic
wou'd otherwiſe have been loſt, and ſoon vani
away with the tranſitory Paſſages of Human Brea
and Life. Before the Diſcourſes and Diſputes of t
Philoſophers began to buſie or amuſe the Greci
Wits, there was nothing written in Proſe, but eith
Laws, ſome ſhort Sayings of wiſe Men, or ſom
Riddles, Parables, or Fables, wherein were couch'
by the Ancients, many Strains of natural and mo
Wiſdom and Knowledge; and beſides theſe, ſom
ſhort Memorials of Perſons, Actions, and of Time
Now 'tis obvious enough to conceive, how muc
eaſier all ſuch Writings ſhou'd be learn'd, and remem
ber'd in Verſe, than in Proſe, not only by the Pl
ſure of Meaſures, and of Senſes, which gives a gre
Impreſſion to the Memory; but by the Order of Fe
which makes a great Facility of tracing one Wo
after another, by knowing what ſort of Foot
Quantity, muſt neceſſarily have preceeded or follow
the Words we retain and deſire to make up.

This made Poetry (continues Sir *William*)
neceſſary before Letters were invented, and ſo co
venient afterwards; and ſhews that the great H
nour, and great Requeſt wherein it has always be

as not proceeded only from the Pleaſure and De-
ght, but likewiſe from the Uſefulneſs and Prone
f Poetical Writings.

This is a very good Reaſon why thoſe who firſt
pply'd themſelves to Learning, ſhould make Choice
f a Stile confin'd to Numbers, and exalted by Me-
dy; but it betrays Sir *William*'s Opinion to be, that
erſe was eſſential to Poetry, or that what was Verſe
as Poetry. *Gerrard Voſſius* ſeems of the ſame Opi-
ion in the beginning of his Diſcourſe on the Na-
re and Inſtitution of Poeſie; but in his following
reatiſe he makes a Poet a ſomething, more exalted
eing than a Verſifier, and Poetry to be very diffe-
nt from meer Verſification.

Sir *William*, on the other ſide, is ſo fixt in this
pinion, that one of the Cauſes of the Decay and De-
enſion of Poetry is aſſigned by him to be firſt the
anſlating Poetry into Proſe, or cloathing it in thoſe
oſe Robes, or common Veils, that diſguis'd and
ver'd the true Beauty of its Features, and Exact-
ſs of its Shape. This (continues the Knight) was
ne firſt in *Greek* by *Æſop*. The next Succeſſion of
oetry in Proſe ſeems to have been in the *Mileſian*
les, which were a ſort of little Paſtoral Romances;
d though much in Requeſt in Old *Greece* and *Rome*,
t we have no Examples, that I know of them, un-
ſs it be the *Longi Paſtoralia*, which gives a Taſte of
e great Delicacy and Pleaſure, that was found ſo
nerally in thoſe ſorts of Tales. The laſt kind of
oetry in Proſe (continues he) is that, which in
ter Ages has over-run the World under the Name
Romances; which tho' it ſeem modern, and a
oduction of the *Gothic Genius*; yet the Writing is
cient. The Remainders of *Petronius Arbiter* ſeem
be of this Kind, and, that which *Lucian* calls his
ue Hiſtory: But the moſt ancient that paſſes by the
ame, is *Heliodorus*, famous for the Author's chuſing
loſe his Biſhopric, rather than diſown the Child

of his Wit. The true Spirit or Vein of ancie
Poetry in this Kind, ſeems to ſhine moſt in Sir P
lip Sidney, whom I eſteem (ſays Sir *William*) both t
greateſt Poet, and the nobleſt Genius of any that hav
left Writings behind them, and publiſh'd in ours,
any other modern Language. A Perſon born capabl
not only of forming the greateſt Ideas, but of leavi
the nobleſt Examples, if the length of his Life h
been equal to the Excellence of his Wit and his Vi
tues.

Allowing the juſt Encomium he gives Sir *Phil*
I muſt diſſent from him in his Opinion of the Cau
of the Decay of Poetry; and I would rather eſtee
the Growth of Verſificators and their Multiplicity a
the Cauſe of their Neglect and Contempt. This Ar
in its firſt Appearance in the World, was exercis
only by the Knowing, and Men of as great Judgme
as Genius; but in Proceſs of Time every one attemp
ed Verſification, and by that endeavour'd to paſs f
Poets; but when Men found nothing great an
touching in their Verſes, nothing that penetrated th
Soul, and ſatisfy'd the Underſtanding; when a
was reſolv'd into Numbers, and peculiarity of Phraſ
that lively Pleaſure, which true Poetry gave, ceaſin
the Admiration of Mankind alſo had an End, an
that being no more, Eſteem ſoon vaniſhed.

I know very well that *Gerrard Voſſius* ſtrives ha
againſt *Ariſtotle*, and other great Men of Antiquit
that the Name of *Maker* or *Poet* was given to Au
thors from their writing in Verſe, and not fro
their framing a Deſign, and forming a Fable; th
is not from Imitation, but Numbers; yet at the En
of his Conſtitution he ſeems to recant this Opinio
and allow that of *Ariſtotle*, which is grounded o
Reaſon, and the Judgment of a politer Age and Peo
ple, than any of the Country and Time of *Voſſiu*
He might as well have pretended that Painters d
riv'd their Name and Eſteem from Colouring, an
no

ot from the Deſigning of their Pieces, againſt hich *Pliny*, and all Antiquity, declare.

But I cannot yet diſmiſs Sir *William Temple*, who ſewhere gives ſome better Reaſons of this Decay of e ancient Poetry, at leaſt in *Italy*, where it flouſh'd after it almoſt diſappear'd in *Greece*. Firſt the ncorporating or Confluence of *Germans*, *Gauls*, *Syans*, *Spaniards*, and the like, at *Rome*, which corrupt the Language. Here Sir *William* ſeems ſtill to ake Poetry conſiſt in the Diction, than which nohing can be farther from Truth; which has indeed othing to do with the Eſſence of *Poetry*, ſince that ay be in all Languages.

I more approve of his aſſigning the Growth of Egrams as a Cauſe of this Decay among the *Romans*. *artial Auſonius*, and others (ſays he) fell into this ein, and us'd it indifferently on all Subjects. This ein of *Conceit* ſeem'd proper for ſuch Scraps and plinters into which Poetry was broken, and was ſo gerly follow'd, as almoſt to over-run all that was ompos'd in our modern Languages. The *Italians*, e *French*, the *Spaniards*, as well as *Engliſh*, were for great while full of nothing elſe but Conceit. It as an Ingredient, that gave a Taſte to Compoſitions, hich had little of themſelves; 'twas a Sauce that ave Point to Meat that was flat, and ſome Life to olours that were fading. Thus far the Knight eems to have touch'd one Cauſe at leaſt of the Loſs f the ancient and true Strain of Poetry. And I hink he is as much or more in the right in what ollows.

Another Vein which entred and help'd to corrupt ur modern Poetry (ſays he) is that of *Ridicule*, as if othing pleas'd but what made one laugh, which et came from two different Actions of the Mind. or as Men have no Diſpoſition to laugh at what hey are moſt pleas'd with; ſo they are very little leas'd with many Things which they laugh at.

But let the Execution be what it will, the Desi
the Cuſtom, the Example, are very pernicious
Poetry, and indeed to all Virtue and good Quali
among Men, which muſt be indeed diſheartned
finding how unjuſtly and undiſtinguiſh'd they
under the Laſh of Railery, and this Vein of ri
culing the good, as well as the bad, the guilty a
the innocent together.

And in his firſt *Eſſay* he has a juſt Reflection
this Vein of Ridicule. *I wiſh (ſays he) that*
Vein of ridiculing all that is ſerious *and* good; *all*
mour and Virtue, as well as Learning and Poetry,
have no worſe Effects on any other State (than on
Spaniſh *Monarchy made by* Cervonites *by his Book*
Don Quixot.) *'Tis the Itch of our Age and Clim*
and has over-run both the Court and the Stage, enter
Houſe of Lords and Commons as boldly as a Coffee-Hou
Debates of Council, as well as private Converſation;
I have known in my Life more than one or two Miniſ
of State, who had rather have ſaid a witty thing,
have done a wiſe one, and made the Company laugh,
ther than the Kingdom rejoyce.

Had Sir *William* liv'd to ſee Men arrive at the
Form of Wits by no other Quality, he might
more juſtly have deplor'd the Loſs of all that
noble and great in Writing, while the poor and ra
bling Amuſements of Buffoons, carry'd the To
away from all reliſh of any thing ſerious, and d
matically dictated their Rules of Excellence contr
to Truth and Reaſon.

There is ſtill a greater Cauſe of the Decay of
ancient Poetry, which is the Poets quitting th
which rais'd them above the Moderns, that is
incorporating their Religion in their Poems; it
by this means that they excell'd the Poets of our A
as in *Homer* and the *Athenian* Tragic Poets. For
Moderns, in moſt Parts of Poetry, which depend
only on Religion, have either excell'd, or come

y near them, as in Comedy and Satyr. In Comedy, ertainly *Ben. Johnſon* has, or ought to have, the Prefe- ence of *Plautus* and *Terence*; and as far as we can diſ- over by theſe two *Latin* Poets, of the *Greek* likewiſe; nd in Satyr, Monſieur *Boileaus* is not far behind ei- her *Homer* or *Juvenal*; though it muſt be confeſs'd hat he built on their Foundation.

Thus having ſeen the Decay and Loſs of Poetry, which was compleated by the Inundation of the *Goths*, *Vandals*, *Hunns*, and the other barbarous Na- tions that ſunk the Empire and Wit of *Rome* in one common Ruin, let us examine a little into its Reſur- rection. Sir *William Temple* gives us an Account of the *Runnes*, from whence he derives the *Rimers*, or Poets of the *Goths*, who gave to the Moderns their Way of Writing in Rime; which, on the Revival of Poetry in the modern Tongues, impoſ'd it ſelf on all the Writers of thoſe Times, and has fix'd it ſelf ſo in all Nations, that it is to be feared, it will ſcarce ever be wholly baniſh'd the Confines of Poetry. As to the *Runnes*, I refer you to Sir *William*, and ſhall only give you a ſhort Hiſtory of Poeſy, from its Riſe in *Provence*, from whence *Italy* her ſelf took her Pattern and Mode of Writing.

In the Beginning of the laſt Century but two, when People began to open their Eyes, and look fa- ther into good Literature, *Italy* had much the Start of the reſt of *Europe*, by the generous Care of the *Medici*, by whom, and under whoſe Influence, *Ariſto- tle*'s Works were firſt brought into the Hands of the curious, and his *Poetics* chiefly employed the Study and Application of the ingenious. The *Italian* Men of Letters were by theſe Means perfect in them, before they were ſo much as known on this Side the *Alps*; which gave them this Reflexion on the *Tramontani*, that they made no Conſcience of breaking the whol- ſome Laws of the *Greeks* and the *Romans*. *Bibiena* (af- terwards a Cardinal) firſt try'd his Genius in a Come-

dy, and was followed by *Piccolouzini* and ſeveral others who took *Plautus* and *Terence* for their Patterns *Triſſino*, *Ruſcalli*, *Cynthio*, *Taſſo*, and many others, wr Tragedy in blank Verſe, with the *Chorus*, to the be of their Power, according to the *Athenian* Models.

In *Francis* the Firſt's Time, 'tis true *Marot* an others flouriſh'd by the Encouragement of that Prin In the Year 1597, *Peter L'Arien* publiſhed Comedie written, as he tells us, in Imitation of the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, and the modern *Italians*. Afte him, in *France*, *Alexander Hurdy* attempted Tragedy and his Works were publiſhed in 1625, and him, no long after, ſucceeded the famous *Corneille*.

Since the Decay of the *Roman* Empire, this Iſland has been more fortunate, perhaps, in Poetry, than any of our Neighbours. The *Quærulus* printed with *Plautus*, was written by *Gildas*, who lived in the 5th Century. After him, *Thalieſſin* and *Merlin*, and others had they not written in *Welſh*, might yet have main-tain'd a great Eſteem among us.

Our *Saxon* Kings have their Grants in Rime ye on Record. *William* I. came ſinging *Roland*, to fight that deciſive Battle which gave him the Crown of *England*. And indeed, for writing in *Latin*, the World had not the like of our Poets of that Century. *Joſeph of Exeter* wrote ſo much above the Age, that we had almoſt loſt him from our Nation, his Poem of the *Trojan War* paſſing a great while in Print, for the Work of *Cornelius Nepos*.

He brings us down to King *Richard* I. with whom, and with *Baldwin* Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, he went to the *Holy War*. This King *Richard*, *Ceur de Lion*, and his Brother *Jeffrey*, had lived much in their younger Days, in the Courts of ſeveral Princes in and about *Provence*; and by that means, became much delighted with their Language, their Poetry, then called the *Gay Science*, and their Poets, who began not long after his

his Time, to be in great Vogue, in moſt Parts of *Europe*.

The *Italians* own, that the beſt Part of their Language and their Poetry is drawn from that of *Provence*, as indeed is that of the *Spaniſh*, and of moſt other modern Tongues. It is certain, that *Petrarch* (the Poet whom the *Italians* moſt boaſt of to this very Day) would appear very empty, if the *Provencial* Poets had from him all their own; and indeed all our modern Poetry comes from them.

Never was known that Application both in the Princes and People at that Time, every where, to the *Provencial* Poetry; ſo that one of their *Romance* Writers would needs have it, that *Charlemaign* made a Donation of that *Province*, to be the *Poets Patrimony*. But I fear the Records of this Donation will be as hard to come by, as thoſe of that of *Conſtantine*, for the *Patrimony* of the Church.

I muſt take Notice here, that with this *Provencial* Poetry, ſprung that Hereſy, as they call'd it, of the *Albigenſes*, which ſo much alarmed the *Popiſh* World in thoſe Days, and coſt ſo many *Cruſades* to ſuppreſs. *Raimond*, Count of *Thoulouſe* was the Protector of the *Albigenſes*, and at the ſame time, a principal Patron of theſe Poets. And ſeveral neighbouring Princes were of the Number of theſe Poets, and join'd in a League for the Defence of that Opinion, againſt the Pope. This made the *Monks* ſo angry with theſe Poets, as to accuſe, nay, ridicule the Patronage of *Richard* I. that he gave them, Among whom was *Anſelm Tuidet*, honourably mentioned by *Petrarch*. This *Anſelm* wrote Comedies and Tragedies, which, in his own Country, he could ſell for Two or Three Thouſand Livres, *Tournois*, and ſome for more. Another was *Fouchet* of *Marſeilles*, who, on the Death of King *Richard*, went Home, and turn'd *Monk*, and roſe afterwards to be Archbiſhop of *Thoulouſe*: He is prais'd both by *Dante* and *Petrarch*. A third was *Jeffrey Rudet*, mentioned with Honour by

Petrarch. There is ſomething very Romantic in h
Death.

Whilſt this Poet was with our Prince *Jeffrey*, Kin
Richard's Brother, he was told by Pilgrims that cam
from the *Holy Land*, ſo many fine things of the Cou
teſs of *Tripoli*, that he cou'd ſtay no longer from go
ing to ſee her; ſo he puts on a Pilgrim's Weeds, tak
a Voyage to *Tripoli*, fell ſick by the Way, and e'er h
could come aſhore, was almoſt dead. The Counte
inform'd of his *Errantry*, went to the Ship, and too
him by the Hand; he open'd his Eyes, and ſaid, tha
having ſeen her, he was ſatisfy'd, and ſo gave up th
Ghoſt. The Counteſs made a moſt ſplendid Funer
for him, and erected over him a Tomb of *Porphyr*
having his Epitaph in *Arabian* Verſe. After which
ſhe cauſed all his Sonnets to be curiouſly copy'd ove
embelliſh'd with golden Letters; and being after thi
taken with a very great Melancholy, ſhe enter'd in
to a Monaſtery, and profeſs'd her ſelf a *Nun*.

Savery de Mauleon was another of theſe *Provenci*
Poets mention'd in the *Engliſh* Hiſtory of thoſe Time
To this Number we may likewiſe add King *Richa*
himſelf, whoſe Works with thoſe of the reſt alread
mentioned, were in the Hands of Seignior *Redi*, wh
a few Years ago (if he does not ſtill) belong'd to th
Grand Duke of *Tuſcany*.

In ſhort, from the *Provencial* Poets, Poetry, a
not from the *Runnes*, or *Runnic Rimers* (as Sir *Willia*
Temple would have it) reviv'd; but how differe
it was from that, which dy'd with the old *Roma*
we have already conſidered.

As for its Riſe in *England*, eſpecially in our nati
Tongue, we have very blind Footſteps to trace i
Chaucer, *Gower*, and *Lydgate*, were the firſt who ma
any tolerable Figure in that Dreſs; of whom *Chau*
is the only one who may juſtly claim the Name
a Poet. After him, *Engliſh* Poetry was totally neg
ected, thoſe who had any Genius towards th

A

Art, writing in *Latin*. Till in, or about the Reign of *Henry* VIII. our Verſification was firſt brought to a tolerable Degree of Harmony, by Sir *Thomas Wyat* the Elder, and *Henry* Earl of *Surrey*. Theſe Gentlemen having ſpent much of their Youth in *Italy*, and being, by Inclination, very converſant with the Writers of that Nation, began to poliſh the *Engliſh* Numbers, and may juſtly therefore be allow'd to be the Reformers of our *Metre* and *Stile*. *Geraldine*, a *Florentine* Lady, inſpir'd the Earl of *Surrey*, with *Love*, and with *Poetry*; ſo that we may ſay, that the *Engliſh* Verſification, at leaſt, was refin'd by the *Italian* Beauty.

After him, Sir *Philip Sidney* ſhew'd himſelf a great Maſter of our Numbers; and he was ſoon follow'd by *Spencer*, and by *Shakeſpear*. But tho' there was a conſiderable Progreſs made in this Particular, in our firſt Approaches, yet the Smoothneſs of Verſe was loſt, or not purſued by many great Writers afterwards, till Mr. *Waller* had gain'd a univerſal Applauſe; the Fluency of his Lines pleaſing all that read him; and all who pretended to Wit and Poetry reading him, it ſpread wider and wider, till Mr. *Dryden* brought it to its laſt and greateſt Perfection.

This *Smoothneſs of Verſification* is now ſo common, that it has ſwallow'd up all the more ſubſtantial Graces of Poetry; and it is as difficult now to find the meaneſt *Scribbler* of the Times, without this Quality, as to meet in them the *Genius* and *Eſſence* of *Poeſy*.

Here I made an End; and when we were juſt breaking up, as having paſs'd thro' the Buſineſs of the Day, *Lauden* addreſs'd himſelf again to ſpeak in the following Manner.

Tho' my Friend *Gamaliel* has given you ſeveral Cauſes of the Decay, and almoſt entire Loſs of *Poeſy*, yet I fancy there remains yet one, which perhaps may come nearer the Fact, than any yet offer'd.

To

To come at this, it is my humble Opinion, that we muſt take a ſhort View of the firſt Riſe, or Cauſes of this divine Art among Men; and this I ſhall borrow from *Ariſtotle*, the Father and beſt of *Critics*.

This Critic, in the 4th Chapter of his *Poetics*, ſuppoſes two chief Cauſes of this Art originally. There are two principal Cauſes, ſays he, and both very natural, which ſeem to have produc'd *Poetry*. The firſt is *Imitation*, a Quality which is born with *Human Kind*; for they differ from other Creatures by the great Aptneſs and Deſire they have for *Imitation*; and it is by the Means of this, that they learn the firſt Elements of Sciences, and that all their *Imitations* give them a peculiar Pleaſure: For it is by *Imitation* only, that Children learn any thing, as to walk, to ſpeak, to write, and the like.

The Pleaſure which *Imitation* gives us, is every Day obvious in our View of Pictures. Some Originals, as terrible Beaſts, dead, or dying Men, which we look on with Diſguſt and Averſion, with Fear and Horror, as they are in Nature, we behold with a great deal of Satisfaction and Pleaſure in Paintings; and this Pleaſure is the greater, as they bear a greater Reſemblance to their Originals. There is nothing indeed ſo ugly, or ſo horrible, but what looks pleaſant in a Picture; but it is not, that every Object is fine in it ſelf; for what's really ugly, can never be fine; But it is becauſe there is nothing ſo agreeable as *Imitation*. For this Reaſon, the Poets of all Ages have choſen for the Subjects of their Deſcriptions, the moſt terrible Objects; and, in this, the Painters have frequently follow'd their Example. Thus *Nichomachus* drew *Medea* killing her Children, and *Theon* painted *Oreſtes* putting his Mother *Clytemneſtra* to Death. Our modern Painters have given us many Pieces of this Kind, of no vulgar Fame. We look on theſe with Delight, but that Delight is in no Manner any Praiſe, or Approbation of the Actions which they *imitate*,

but

t of the Art which was capable of *imitating* thoſe
ctions with ſuch a happy Succeſs. The ſame holds
Poetry; we are pleas'd with the Deſcriptions of
oſe things which we could not look on as they
e in Nature.

The Reaſon of this is, that not only the Wiſe have
Deſire to learn, but the ſame Propenſity is found in
l Men, to Knowledge, tho' not the ſame Capacity.
or Men being endow'd with Reaſon, and naturally
ving Arts, take a peculiar Delight in ſeeing any
ing that is made by Art and Reaſon, and both
eſe are concern'd in all *Imitations*. And for this
eaſon, it has the Advantage over *Truth* it ſelf, which
ppears *ſimple*, *ordinary*, and *common*; whereas, *Subtil-*
, and *Induſtry* are join'd to *Truth* in an exact and
icky *Imitation*. That gives to the Mind an Occaſion
f Reaſoning, and making Reflections: For the Plea-
re we have in ſeeing a curious *Imitation*, does not
iſe from the Beauty of the Original, which is the
bject of the *Imitation*, but from this, that the Mind
this, finds Means to conſider, and to inform it
lf, by looking on them. For Example, (as *Ariſto-*
remarks, when we ſee the Picture of a Man whom
e know, we preſently declare, *This is ſuch a one.*
ut if the Portraict be of one we never ſaw, the
leaſure which that Picture gives, does not proceed
om the Exactneſs of the *Imitation*, but from the Art,
the Mixture or Vivacity of the Colours: For no
an can judge of the Exactneſs of an *Imitation*, who
es not know the Original. The Pleaſure, therefore,
at ariſes on this Occaſion, muſt be, as the *Critic* ob-
rves, from the Beauty of the Piece, or from the Vi-
acity and Mixture of the Colours, or from the Choice
the Action, or from the Poſture of the Perſons, or
mething elſe that draws the Eyes upon it, and *exer-*
ſes and *inſtructs* the Mind, whilſt it *divertſ* it.

If *Imitation* be thus natural to us, as I hope it is
w made out to be, in my Opinion, *Number* and

Har-

Harmony are not defs'd. This is the second Cause
Poetry. For whatever Inclination Men may have
Imitation, yet had that never given Rise to Poetry,
they had not been so much inclin'd to *Number*
Harmony; that is, Cadence and Song. Under Nu
ber, says *Aristotle*, I comprehend Verse, which is e
dently one Part of it; for indeed there can be no Ve
without *Numbers*, tho' there may be *Numbers* in th
various and proper Positions, without Verse; for th
are *Numbers* proper to Prose, especially in the *Greek*
the *Latin*. For those who had the greatest Genius
these, gave Poesy Birth by Degrees, by *Extemp*
Essays. *Imitation* without *Number* and *Harmony*,
those without the former, could never have produ
Poetry. This Art being produc'd in the Assembl
which the primitive Inhabitants of the Earth, w
were either Shepherds, or Labourers) had after th
Vintage, in Honour of the Gods, it could not be
Effect of Study, but of Nature exerted by Joy a
Wine. In short, the first rough Draughts of Poe
were certainly *ex tempore*.

But it soon chang'd its Form, according to the
veral Inclinations of the Poets. That is, Poetry co
fisted, at first, in some *Off-Hand Pieces*, in which *Sa*
and *Praise* were mix'd, and blended together; but
was soon divided into two distinct Kinds: Th
who had the largest and most exalted Capacities, s
the Praises of Gods and Heroes; those who had l
amus'd themselves, with Pieces of Raillery a
Satire.

This is the Opinion of *Aristotle*, on the Rise of P
try; but it is delivered with that Modesty and D
ference as is worthy of so great a Man, w
would not Dogmatically decide on a thing of such A
tiquity and Uncertainty, that nothing positive co
with any Kind of Justice, be asserted. And the Co
jectures on this Head, as well as upon all obscure S

ſes, may happen to be true, yet they do not always lead us to Truth.

According to this Source of Poetry, we find that the ſame *Critic* has determin'd, that all Sorts of Poetry are nothing but *Imitations*. The *Heroic*, or *Narrative Poem*, *Tragedy*, *Comedy*, and the *Dithyrambic*, ſays he, are only pure *Imitations*. Nay, he extends it further, to *Muſic* it ſelf; for he ſays, moſt Part of the Airs for the Flute, and Leſſons for the Harp, are the ſame. Thus he determines, that Poeſy in general is an *Imitation*; ſo that under this general Head are included all the particular Parts of this Art, which by the ſame Reaſons muſt be *Imitations*.

I think, no Man that knows any thing of the Matter, can doubt, but that the *Heroic Poem*, *Tragedy*, and *Comedy*, are really pure *Imitations*; but that *Dythirambics*, which was only a Poem ſung in the Honour of *Bacchus*, ſhould be ſo, may perhaps ſeem more difficult to prove. There is a Difference between a perfect and an imperfect *Imitation*. The firſt is viſible in the *Heroic*, *Tragic*, and *Comic Poems*, as the latter is in all Narrations, or Songs of Praiſe, or any other of the *Leſſer Poetry*. For Example, all that *Homer* makes *Chryſes* ſpeak in the firſt Book of the *Iliads*, is in *exact Imitation*, becauſe he lays aſide the Perſon of the *Poet*, and puts on that of an *Actor*, which he *imitates* when he *acts* and *ſpeaks*. But if, inſtead of making *Chryſes* appear, he had only related his Words, and told us, that *Chryſes deſired the* Argives to ſend back *his Daughter*, &c. it had been a *ſimple Narration*, without that exact *Imitation* which is the Life of *Tragedy*. But altho' this had been a Narration, yet ſhould we not have fail'd of finding *Imitation* in it; ſince every *Narration* has always ſome Object in View which it ſuppoſes to *imitate* and make known, and by Conſequence is an *Imitation* indirectly indeed, but 'tis an *Imitation*; and this Way are *Dythirambics* contain'd under this Kind, ſince they contain'd the Praiſe of the *Actions* of *Bacchus*,

chus, and all Mens *Actions* are *Imitations*, in the Opinion of both *Ariſtotle* and *Plato*.

I will not detain you with any farther Diſcourſe of *Imitation*, and prove with *Ariſtotle*, that *Actions* only are the Objects of it; I will take it for granted, ſince it is plain from all the great Writers of *Antiquity*. What I have ſaid is ſufficient to ſhew, that as *Poetry* is an *Imitation*, ſo *Imitation* was the Cauſe and Riſe of *Poetry*; and that there can be nothing worthy the Name of a *Poem*, where there is no *Imitation*. This being admitted, I think it will be pretty plain, that the *Loſs* of *Poetry*, or at leaſt, its very great *Degeneracy* has proceeded from the Neglect of the Writers in this Particular of *Imitation*. How few Pieces have we had for ſome Hundreds of Years, which have a Claim to be *true* and *exact Imitations*? Nor was there ever an Age, in which this Eſſential was ſo much neglected as at preſent, which is the Reaſon, that our Verſe having retain'd nothing of the *Original* Cauſe of *Poetry*, but *Number* and *Harmony*, are ſuch lame and imperfect Performances. And this proceeding from the *Ignorance* of the Writers, as well as of them who give Vogue and Reputation, muſt render *Poetry* ſcarce the Shadow of what it was, when it produc'd Works which have tranſported *all Nations*, and *all Ages*.

Tho' *Number* and *Harmony* have been allow'd likewiſe one of the Cauſes of *Poetry*, yet *Imitation* is the moſt valuable Part; for there may be juſt *Imitations*, that is, true *Poems*, without that moſt known Kind of *Number* and *Harmony*, which we call *Verſe*. This is allow'd by *Ariſtotle*, and all but *Voſſius* and Sir *William Temple*; tho, if I miſtake not, Sir *William* does, in ſome Meaſure, allow it, at the ſame time that he condemns it, and fixes it as one of the Cauſes of the *Decay* and *Loſs* of this *Art*.

I beg the Company's Pardon for detaining them with my crude Conjectures; but if what I have ſaid have any Foundation in Reaſon, I ſhall be ſatisfy'd

I coul

could have made it more plain by giving Inſtances om ſome of our moſt taking Poems publiſhed in eſe Days, but I was afraid of incurring the Impu- ion of *Envy*: of which I hope and believe my Na- re incapable; and for that Reaſon, I have rather oſen to deprive my ſelf of ſome Proofs which I u'd have brought to confirm my Poſition.

Here *Laudon* having made an End, the Company parated; and after a Glaſs or two by our ſelves, I d him Good Night, being highly ſatisfy'd with hat he had before, and did after, ſay in the Conclu- n of the Diſcourſe.

The End of the Firſt DIALOGUE.

THE *Complete* ART OF POETRY

DIALOGUE II.

Of the Use and Necessity of Rules in Poet

I Have shewn you, *Crito*, in the former Dialog what past in our agreeable Company, on t first Meeting; and I am confident, that the l fence of that *noble Art*, in which you are so gre Master, and by Consequence, of which you are great a Lover, can by no means be disagreeable you; nay, I am well assured, that you will give highest Approbation of what has been said on t Score, since it is founded on Justice and Reason.

I d

I ſhall now proceed to let you know what paſs'd in he ſecond Day's Converſation, to prove a Point hich, I am ſatisfy'd, you do allow to be Truth; nd that is, The *Uſe* and *Neceſſity* of the *Rules of Art*, n *Poetry*, without which, all muſt be governed by *unruly Fancy*, and *Poetry* become the Land of *Confuſion*, hich is, in Reality, the Kingdom of *Beauty*, *Order*, nd *Harmony*.

Laudon being thus enlarg'd from the Tyranny of *uſineſs*, I could not deny my ſelf the Pleaſure of re-eating my Viſits as often as I could; and the more ften I repeated them, the more my Appetite was rai-ed for their Continuance; for I always came away ith ſome Improvement of my Underſtanding, as ell as a full Satisfaction for the Hours I ſpent in his ompany.

A little before Dinner, *Laudon* was call'd down bout Buſineſs; and in the mean while, happening to ee a Book lye in the Window, I took it up to paſs he Time till his Return; but was not a little urpriz'd to find it to be, Biſhe's *Art of* Engliſh *Poe-ry*; a very extraordinary Title, thought I, as if the *Art of Poetry* were not the ſame in all Languages.

I had not caſt my Eye, in a curſory Manner, on any Pages, before *Laudon* return'd: Pray, Sir, ſaid , how came you by this worthy Author, who wri-ing on the *Art of Poetry*, would perſwade us, that here is no *Art* at all in it, and aims chiefly at the Knack of *Verſifying*; and yet, even in that, is full of *roſs Abſurdities*, and *viſible Contradictions*?

Why, Sir, reply'd *Laudon*, you muſt know, that the ine Mrs. *Lamode* was to pay my Wife a Viſit yeſterday, n'd brought this Book along with her; and I find, on er Departure, ſhe forgot this noble Piece of *Criticiſm*, he infallible Director of her Speculations that Way. would have ſent it Home to her, but that ſhe and er Huſband, honeſt *Jeffathar*, are to dine with me to Day;

Day; for I would not bear the Scandal of having thought Part of my own Collection.

It is impoſſible, my Friend, ſaid I, that any one that knows you, ſhould ſuſpect you guilty of this Folly; and to caſt an Eye upon a Book of ſo promiſing a Title, is juſtify'd by the Title. I have my ſelf peruſ'd great Part of this ridiculous Author, and he has almoſt provok'd me into a *Writer*, to vindicate the Honour of the *Art* I admire, from the ſhameful Ignorance of a little *Pretender*, had not the Clamours of the *Traders* in Books deterr'd me, by aſſerting the Undertaking would be unfair, in not only interfering with the Sale of a Copy already receiv'd, but in all Probability, of transferring it from the Bookſellers Shops, to thoſe of the Paſtry Cook and Grocer.

That Reaſon, in my Opinion, (interrupted *Lauda*) is too fallacious to influence ſo good a Judgment, to deſiſt from a laudable Deſign, ſince it is drawn from private and particular Intereſt, againſt the public and general Good; ſacrificing the Improvement and Honour of Arts to the miſerable Proſpect of ſervile Gain. For this would be a certain and ſpeedy Way of obſtructing all Manner of Learning; ſince, had this been a Rule founded on general Conſent (as, if it have any Validity, it muſt be) there never could have been any Progreſs or Improvement in any Art or Science.

The Multiplicity of Books in other Arts, is no Objection to the Increaſing the Number; and notwithſtanding the preſent Perfection of the *Mathematics*, the Excellence of Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Diſcoveries, has not put an End to their *noble Enquiries*. And as no Man preſumes to write in that Art, who is ignorant of its Principles, yet we ſee daily Improvements made in every Part of it.

I cannot therefore imagine why you, or any other Gentleman of your Knowledge, may not do the ſame Juſtice to *Poetry*, and vindicate that *divine Art*, which

as been the *Glory of great Nations*, the *Favourite of reat Monarchs*, the *illuſtrious Proof of a true and great Po-teneſs*, in ſo many of the purer Ages, from the Abuſes f a *Writer* that has diſcovered a moſt profound Ignoance of every Part of it (at leaſt, as far as he has been leaſed hitherto to attempt) and endeavours, by pubiſhing his Abſurdities, to promote them. For tho' e has ventur'd only on the inconſiderable *Knack of erſifying*, yet in that he is out in the very Fundamentals, which ſufficiently betrays both the *Capacity* nd the *Guſto* of the Perſon. But this is the hard Fate f *Poetry*, different from that of all other Arts and Sciences, that the Learned only write of thoſe; but the ules and Theory of this falls often into as ignorant ands, as the Practice generally does. For, as moſt ommonly Men without *Genius* or *Skill* in the Art, t up for *Poets*, forgetting that of *Horace*,

Why is he honour'd with a Poet's Name,
Who neither knows, nor wou'd obſerve a Rule. Roſc.

nd would fain obtrude on the World, the *incoherent ibertiniſms* of their own crude Fancies, for *Poetry*; ſo ould this Author impoſe his ſhallow and *indigeſted otions* (moſtly borrow'd from the *Meſſrs. of the Port-oyal* on the *French* Verſification) for the true and hole Art of *Engliſh Poetry*. The Plauſibility of his itle has carried off ſo many Impreſſions, as have made with the ignorant, the *Standard* of Writing. So at the Reaſon is the ſtronger for a juſt *Criticiſm*, to eſtroy the ill Effects of this *falſe one*.

You muſt therefore find out ſome better Reaſon for our Silence on this Occaſion, than what you have iven, or plainly confeſs, that you ſacrifice to *Idle-ſs* more than to *Juſtice*.

I muſt own (reply'd I) that there is too much of at Allay in my Temper; and from that, it may be, eſe ſpecious Scruples have had Power to deter me from

from this Task, yet assure your self, that I am n
wholly without a reasonable Obstacle. I must t
you, that the Undertaking seems to me to be of
manner of *Use*, but lies under the forbidding a
odious Imputation of *Ill-Nature*. The *Libertinism*
the *Age*, which makes *Scribbling* so very easy to ev
ry one who has the least Address at *Crambo*, will mak
the *Million* averse to all Regulations, which rend
Writing so very difficult; and this the *Poet*s
(much the Majority even of the Writers in Vogue)
*Wit*s, do lay to the Charge of *Ill-Nature*.

All, therefore, that I can expect from such an A
tempt, is to please a *very*, *very few*, *good Judg*
and Men of *true Sense*, and disoblige all the Ladi
and the Beaux, by imposing Laws too severe o
their *Sonnets* and *Madrigals*. And to deter us from a
Rules, this *very Author* under our Consideration, th
blind Guide to *Parnassus*, plainly tells us in the open
ing of his Preface, *That it is in vain to aim at a gre*
Reputation on Account of his poetical Performances,
barely following the Rules of others, and reducing the
Speculations to Practice, insinuating that the *Rules*
this *Art* are of little Consequence to a Perfection
in it.

He seems (assum'd *Laudon*) very *obscure*, or ver
false in that Position. For if he mean, that th
observing, that is, the coming up to the Rules o
Poetry cannot produce any *great Reputation*; he is ab
solutely in the wrong, because, without this, no
Man ever yet obtain'd any *considerable* or *lasting*
Name in *Poetry*. If he mean not this, then he mean
nothing.

It has, I confess, been an old Dispute, whether *Art*
or *Nature* made a *Poet*, but a Dispute, I think, like
many more grounded on the not well understanding
the *Terms*. For *Art* entirely includes *Nature*, that
being no more, than *Nature reduc'd to Form*. Howe
ver *Horace*, near the end of his Art of *Poetry*, seem
long

ng ſince to have decided this Queſtion with great
erneſs and *Brevity*.

Some think that Poets *may be form'd by* Art,
Others maintain, that Nature *makes them ſo.*
I neither ſee what Art *without a Vein,*
Nor Wit *without the Help of* Art *can do;*
But mutually need each others Aid. Roſc.

This is the Opinion of *Horace* confirm'd by *Reaſon*
d Experience. For without *Art*, there can be no
rder, and without *Order*, *Harmony* is ſought in vain,
here nothing but ſhocking *Confuſion* can be found.
hoſe ſcatter'd Sparks of a great *Genius*, which ſhou'd
ine with united *Glory*, are in the huddle of Igno-
nce or want of *Art*, ſo diſſipated, and divided, and
blended with Contraries, that they are extreamly
bſcur'd, if not entirely extinguiſh'd. Thus the Par-
cles and Seeds of Light in the Primocal Chaos
rugled in vain to exert their true Luſtre, till Matter
as by *Art Divine* brought into order, and this *noble*
eem of the *Univerſe* compleated in *Number* and *Fi-*
ures, by the Almighty *Poet* or *Maker*.

But it has been the *Ignorance* of the Rules that
as made the *Many* and their Advocates declaim
with ſo much Vehemence againſt them, as Curbs to
Wit and *Poetry*; for did they know them, they wou'd
lainly ſee, that they do, in Reality, add to them
he greateſt Diſtinction and Honour they can hope
or, by ſetting up a *true Standard*, by which the due
Glory of *Wit* and *Poetry* may be paid to *Merit*, with-
out ſo wretched a Fate, as to be oblig'd to ſhare with
Poetaſters, *Verſifyers*, and *worthleſs Pretenders*; which
ertainly cannot be look'd on, as an *ill-natur'd* Work;
but the Effect of a *juſt* and *generous* Temper.

Thus (to inſtance in one ſort of *Poetry*) the Ene-
mies of *Art* wou'd fain perſuade us, that no Play, in
which the Rules of *Art* are obſerv'd, will pleaſe;

where-

whereas, indeed, no Play did ever pleaſe for a Time, but by thoſe Parts of it, which were conformed to the Rules, which cannot really be reduced to Practice but by a Perſon of the greateſt *Capacity* and *Genius*. For can there be any Creature, that pretends to the leaſt Portion of a *rational Soul*, who is pleas'd with the Conduct of *Shakeſpear* (except in one or two Plays) in which there is nothing *curious*, nothing *great*, nothing *judicious*. No, it is the Excellence of that *Poet* in the *Expreſſion* of the *Manners*, in the *Diſtinction* of the *Characters* and ſome of his Draughts of the *Paſſions*, added to *Preſcription*, and the *Ignorance* of the Audience, that makes him pleaſe in thoſe of his Plays, which are fixt in the Eſteem of the Town, to which the reſt, though equally good, have often in vain endeavour'd to ariſe.

If ſome *Plays* have miſs'd of Succeſs, which were *call'd* regular, by thoſe, who knew nothing of the *Rules*, I dare aſſert, that they were *only* call'd, but were not ſo in *Reality*. For it will be obvious to any Man, who is acquainted with them, that he, who comes up to them, muſt produce a *perfect Poem*, that muſt force it ſelf, with a *reſiſtleſs Pleaſure* on all that hear it. To keep ſtill to the *Dramma*. He muſt perfectly *know*, and form his *Deſign*; he muſt *know*, *diſtinguiſh*, and *preſerve* the *Manners*; he muſt be throughly acquainted with all the *Springs*, *Motions*, *Degrees*, *Mixtures*, *Acceſſes*, and *Receſſes* of every *Paſſion*, with their *Oppoſition*, and *Conſiſtence*. He muſt be perfect in the *Sentiments*, and know their Propriety, and Agreeableneſs to the *Manners*, as thoſe have to the *Action*; he muſt be skill'd, and practis'd in the *Diction*, which includes both *Numbers* and *Expreſſion*. Who can do all this but a Man of a great *Capacity* of Soul (which we call *Genius*) a large and ſtrong *Imagination* to receive and form the *Images* of Things, and a ſolid *Judgment* to reduce them to their *proper Orders* and *Claſſes*? And this is writing *according to the Rules*.

But

But let the *Imagination* be never ſo ſtrong, and fer-
e of *Ideas*, without the Aſſiſtance of Judgment
hich can only be informed and directed by the
ated Rules) there can be nothing produc'd *entirely*
autiful. 'Tis all the rude Product of *uncultivated*
ſt. There may be a great Deal of rich Oar, but
ogg'd with the dull and worthleſs *Sparr* and *indige-*
d Earth. But *Judgment*, like the Fire, can only ſe-
rate the Parts, and draw thence an uniform and
luable Maſs of Metal.

The Rules are a great Help to many a Man of *Geni-*
; for it is ſo far from probable, that it is ſcarce
ſſible, that unaſſiſted Nature, tho' never ſo vigo-
us, can find out and practiſe all the Parts neceſſary
the forming a compleat Poem. For as in Archi-
ſture, Painting, and Muſick, no Man did give us
y thing great and complete, without knowing, and
ng Practice of the Rules of thoſe Arts; ſo in *Poe-*
, nothing truly excellent was ever yet ſeen, with-
t a Maſtery in the *Poetic* Principles.

But (interrupted I) you forget, that *Homer* and the
ſt Poets are objected againſt your Poſition; who,
they affirm, not only wrote before any Rules were
rm'd, but were the very Men from whom moſt
theſe were drawn by *Ariſtotle*, and the reſt of the
itics.

I confeſs (reply'd *Laudon*) that I cannot tell you
hat Maſter's Inſtructions, or what Rules were regar-
d by *Homer*; or whether the Order and Conduct
ere the Buſineſs of *Lycurgus*, or *Piſiſtratus*, or any
her who collected the ſcattered Books of that *Poet*,
rrected, and firſt made an Edition of them entire;
t, from the Completeneſs of the Poem, as together,
is evident, that a certain Rule was propos'd by the
mpoſer to himſelf (whether found out by *Homer* or
ycurgus) by which he form'd the moſt perfect *Poem*
hat any Age has yet produc'd. A ſhort View of the
lan will put this beyond Queſtion.

" The Love, Avarice, or Pride of *Agamemnon* ma
" him deny the Reſtoration of *Chryſeis*, which ma
" the angry God *Apollo* ſend the Plague into the *Gre*
" Army, in the Cauſe of his injur'd Prieſt. Thi
" moves *Achilles* to oppoſe the arbitrary Will of th
" *King of Men*, ſo far, as to make him reſtore t
" Prieſt's Daughter, and ſeize on *Briſeis*. This pro
" vokes *Achilles* to withdraw his *Myrmidons* from th
" Camp; which Retreat produc'd the Sufferings o
" the *Greeks*, and the Prevalence of the Army o
" *Troy*. That mov'd the Compaſſion of *Patroclus* fo
" his Countrymen; and that generous, and publick
" ſpirited *Pity* gave him his Death, after the Slaugh
" ter of many of the *Trojans*. His Death by *Hect*
" brings *Achilles* again into the Field, which wa
" fatal to *Hector*, reſtor'd the Tranquillity of th
" *Greeks*, and ſo gave them a Poſſibility of Takin
" the Town.

This productive Chain of Incidents, in the *Ili* could not be formed without admirable Art and De ſign; and conſequently, by ſuch Rules as no Ma ſince has been able to alter for the better. But whe ther theſe were written, or traditionally taught by Profeſſors of the Art, or originally in the *Sovereig Genius* of *Homer* himſelf, matters not in the leaſt, ſince they are the ſame that are now eſtabliſhed both in the *Heroic Poem* and the *Drama*.

It will be plain, that what I attribute to *Homer*, is not becauſe he was a *Greek* Poet, or one of ſuch *ven rable Antiquity* (as by ſome to be made coeval with *David*, which I do not think) but becauſe it is from his *Poetry* ſtill extant, undeniably his Due; becauſe I do here allow, that the *Drama*, on its firſt Appe rance in *Athens* it ſelf, was far from the Perfection it afterwards attain'd, tho' the Idea of Tragedy was certainly taken from the *Heroic Poem*; ſince we find it was in the Time of *Theſpis*, almoſt as rude and in conſiſtent as our *Stage* is in our Days; that firſt Rai ſer of the *Athenian Theatre* bringing nothing to Per fection;

ſtion; that was only effected by the *Magiſtrates* In-
ection of the Management, and the *gradual* Ender-
urs of *Æſchylus*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and others.

But my Friend (interrupted I) y-u know, that
eſe Gentlemen urge, that *Shakeſpear* has appear'd in
gland, with the *higheſt Applauſe*, without the *Help*
Art.

But I muſt reply (ſaid *Landon*) firſt, that ſo did
eſpis, and ſome others, in *Athens*; but their *Ab-*
rdities, and *crude Entertainments* vaniſh'd on the Ap-
arance of more *juſt* and *regular* Pieces. Next that
I have already obſerv'd) *Shakeſpear* is great in no-
ing, but what is *according to the Rules of Art*; and
here his Ignorance of them is not ſupply'd by his
nius, Men of *Judgment*, and *good Senſe*, ſee ſuch
ſtrous Abſurdities in almoſt every Part of his Works,
at nothing but his *uncommon* Excellencies in the
her, cou'd ever prevail with us to ſuffer, and
hat he wou'd never have been guilty of, had his
dgment been but well inform'd by *Art*. He had a
nius indeed, capable of coming up to the *Rules*,
t not ſufficient to find them out himſelf, tho' it
plain from his own Words, he ſaw the *Abſurdities*
his own Conduct. And I muſt confeſs, when I
d that Sir *Philip Sidney* before him has diſcover'd
eſe Faults of the *Engliſh* Stage, and that he himſelf
s written one or two Plays very near a *Regularity*,
m the leſs apt to pardon his Errors, that ſeem of
oice, as agreeable to his *Lazyneſs* or *eaſie Gain*, by
hat he committed to the *Theatre*.

But *Rules* ſeem by ſo much the more neceſſary to
try, than to any other *Art* or *Science*, by how
ch the more *common* the Invan-ns of this are,
n of any other whatſoever. The *Love of Verſe*
ms to ſpread through all Mankind, while the Zeal
other Arts is confin'd to a partich.. *Clan* of Admi-
s. Thus every one is not ambitious to be thought
good *Mathematician*, or *Philoſopher*, or *Divine*, or
ſtician, or *Painter*, or the like; yet almoſt every

Man (as if Human Nature were imperfect without it) hopes, and courts *Admiration* and *Applauſe* from his Attempts on the *Muſes*. This is not the Obſervation of a Day. *Horace* remark'd above 1700 Years ago ſomething like it in his Epiſtle to *Auguſtus Cæſar*.

A Pilot only will a Veſſel guide,
And a Phyſician *Medicines preſcribe:*
And ſkilful Hands alone the Chizel uſe,
But learned, and unlearned, ſcribble *Verſe*, &c.

The *Excellence* being, therefore, ſo confeſs'd, and the *Ambition* of it ſo general, the *Rules* that direct our Courſe to it, and diſtinguiſh the *right Road* from the various divious Paths, muſt certainly be agreeable to all, who have a Deſire either of *reading* or *writing* with Satisfaction in this Way. For thus they may *judge* of, and *arrive* at *Excellence*, as being the only Proof of a *Genius*, and without which the moſt exalted (if any Copy of Verſes can merit that Name without this Proof) is a rude and undigeſted Maſs; the *greateſt* Qualifications imperfect, and with which they can only ſhine in their *true Luſtre*.

If, therefore, you cannot find a better Argument than what you have produc'd, for not vindicating the *Art of Poetry* from the ſcandalous *Empericiſms* of *Quacks*, you muſt own *Idleneſs* to be your Director.

I own, (returned I) that you have given ſufficient Reaſons to ſhew the *Neceſſity* of *Rules*, if we would not ſtill paſs for *Barbarians*, with the *politer* Part of the World; yet I am afraid all you have ſaid, however *rational* ſoever, will not ſatisfie too *Many* of our *Authors*, and moſt of our *courteous Readers*, nay even our *Univerſity Men*, who are, or are ſuppos'd to be bred in the very Preſence of the *Muſes*, that *Criticiſm* is not an *ill-natur'd* Thing. However I ſhall endeavour at my Leiſure to ſhew, the Prevalence of your Arguments by the Works of my Conviction. But as this Task is moſt neceſſary, ſo is it alſo attended with

the greateſt Difficulty, if I wou'd accompliſh it with that eaſie Addreſs, which a Diſcourſe of this Nature requires to recommend it to the *Taſte* of the *Town*, eſpecially if I wou'd gratifie the *Gouſt* of the *Ladies*, who have no ſmall Influence on the *Gentlemen* in this, as well as in moſt of our other Pleaſures.

It is therefore, of the *laſt Importance*, to bring them over to the ſide of *Art*, and *good Senſe*; and to do that, I muſt render the Diſcourſe a little more *familiar*, than *Criticiſm* has generally been.

I agree perfectly with you (aſſum'd *Laudon*) and it were to be wiſh'd, that as Mr. *Fontinelle* has render'd the ſeveral Syſtems of *Ptolomy*, *Copernicus*, and *Tycho Brahe* intelligible, and obvious to a Lady's Capacity, ſome other Perſon, as great as he, wou'd attempt the ſame in *Criticiſm*.

Laudon had ſcarce done when Mrs. *Lamode*, her Husband, and the reſt of the Company came in. She was no ſooner got into the Dining-Room, and paſt ſome ſhort Salutes to the Lady of the Houſe, and the reſt of the Company; but ſtarting with an Air, peculiar to herſelf, to *Moriſina*. ---- Ah! my Dear (ſaid ſhe) I am extreamly oblig'd to my good Stars, that I am come to you; this may be of Conſequence to my Cauſe, for if your Husband ſhou'd not agree to my Opinion, I am ſure of your being of my Party.

Ah, Madam! (ſaid *Moriſina*) your Ladyſhip ſtands in Need of no Second in any Cauſe you think fit to eſpouſe; ſo much *Wit*, and ſo much *Beauty* muſt always be victorious; and while Mr. *Lamode*, and Mr. *Triſle* (for *Tom Triſle* is a conſtant Attendant on Mrs. *Lamode*) are here, your Party, Madam, will never need a Reinforcement.

Alas, my Dear *Moriſina* (reply'd Mr. *Lamode*) Mr. *Triſle* declares againſt me, and *Iſſachar*, like a true Husband, ſtands Neuter in his Wife's Quarrel.

Upon my Soul, Madam (cry'd out *Triſle*, with no little Concern) your Ladyſhip does me an infinite

deal of Wrong, I cannot diſſent from your La
ſhip without forfeiting all my Pretenſions to a go
Underſtanding. I proteſt, Gentlemen and Ladies,
only ſaid, I thought the laſt new *Opera* miſera
ſpoil'd by having ſo many of the Words put into o
beaſtly, *barbarous* Language; and that if *Grimaldi*, a
the other incomparable *Italians* had not ſoften'd it wi
the gentle melodious Words of the *Original*, it co
not have been borne by Ears of any tolerable *Guſto*.

I proteſt my Love (aſſum'd *Iſſachar*) I think *Te*
Triſle ſomething in the right; for our Language
too rough for *Harmony*; and in my Opinion, it wou
be much better to have the *Opera*'s perform'd all i
Italian. For ſuch a *Medley* of *Engliſh* and *Italian* re
ders the Entertainment too obnoxious to the *Critics*.

Ah! Fie, Mr. *Lamode* (interrupted his Wife) don
aſſume, don't aſſume ſo much, and ſet your Judgme
above the reſt of the *Beau Monde*, who adorn th
Boxes, and fill the Theatre at theſe admirable Perfo
mances. For my Part, I am infinitely pleaſed wit
this pretty Variety of *Italian* and *Engliſh*; it look
like a Brocade of Silk in Cloth of Gold; nay, i
tranſports me to *Italy*, and then removes me to *En
land*, as the divine Voice and Language ſucceeds ou
rough Tongue, and hoarſe Voice. Pray, Mr. *La
don*, what is your Opinion of this Matter? For ou
is a rough ugly Language, not fit for the fine *Italia
Airs*. I congratulate our *Manly* Tongue, aſſum'd *La
don*, that cannot be debas'd to the Mouths of wretche
Eunuchs, of the moſt corrupt and degenerate Natio
in the World, entirely Slaves, and but half Me
And in my Opinion, a Man of *Senſe* can have n
Excuſe for ſeeing an *Opera*, after the new Mode. Fo
this *Italian Opera*, ſo much cry'd up, ſeems to me
like the Puns and Jeſts of merry Fellows, that wit
the Help of the Warmth of the Bottle, and the He
of Converſation, make us laugh in the unbendin
Hour, when ſeverer Judgment is abſent, but is ſcarc
remember'd the next Day, but with Indignation, th

it could ſurpriſe us into any Sort of Pleaſure. They touch the Head by their Lightneſs, but never reach the Heart. But *Harry Purcel* ſeem'd to have the Genius of *Greek* Muſick; he touch'd the Soul; he made his Way to the Heart, and by that Means, left a Satisfaction in the Pleaſure, when paſt. He had the Art of Painting in Muſick, which *Ariſtotle* mentions of the *Greek* Muſicians; witneſs his *Froſt Scene*, where, by the admirable Conjunction of Flats and Sharps, he makes you almoſt ſhiver both with his Inſtrumental and Vocal Muſick. So that, for my Part, Madam, I think, that if *Italian* Opera's are at all to be admitted, that they would be better in that Tongue, than in *Engliſh*. Firſt, becauſe the Muſical Performances would be better; and next, becauſe the Action of the Performers might perſwade the Imagination, that there is that in the Words which cou'd not be found there, if we underſtood them. But indeed we are not in Danger of underſtanding much when ſung in *Engliſh*, by the admirable Management of thoſe who ſung in our Language. The *Recitativo* ſeems much like the Harmony of *Punch*, both as to the Sound and Manner, as well as Action; and I muſt needs ſay, that the worſt Play of the worſt Poet that ever writ, is a more rational Diverſion than an *Opera*, after the Way of *Italy*. For indeed to me the Entertainment in it ſelf ſeems ſo very inſipid and abſurd, that it is ſcarce poſſible to make any Addition of Abſurdities to it.

Eh! Fie! (aſſum'd Mr. *Lamode*) how can ſo well-bred a Gentleman be ſo ſingular in his Taſte, as not to reliſh what all the Town admires? And not approve what both *France* and *Italy* are ſtriving for the Preheminence in? Now if the Town ſhould fancy a Mixture of three or four Languages, or more, I proteſt I verily believe, that I ſhould not be ſo ſingular as to diſlike it, What think you, Sir, ſaid ſhe to me?

Madam, (ſaid I) 'tis a Diſh I have the utmoſt Averſion to; it turns my Stomach. We have Traſh enough

of our own Growth, and we need not ſeek abroad f
worſe. The beſt Wits of *France* have declar'd again
Opera's: *Rapin*, *Dacier*, *St. Everemont*, and the re
weigh more with me, than *Lullie*, *Louigi*, and t
reſt of the *Trilling Throng*, or all the Applauſes of t
Parterre, the *Amphitheatre*, or the *Lodges*. That Gl
ry of your Sex, Madam *Dacier*, in her excellent Co
futation of Mr. *La Mot*, attributes the Corruption
the Taſte of the Age, to the Reception and Vogue
Opera's. A Man indeed may very well wonder ho
an *Opera*, and *Civil Reaſon*, ſhould be the Growth of t
ſame Climate. *Horace* was angry at the empty Sho
of the *Romans*; what would he then have ſaid to th
vain Entertainment, only directed to bewitch yo
Eyes and Ears; *Muſic* and *Machine*, the *Circe* and *Cal*
ſo, in Conſpiracy againſt *Nature* and *Good Senſe*. T
a Debauch the moſt inſinuating, and the moſt perni
cious. Tho' the *Grecians* were as much for *Sing*
and *Dancing*, as any *French* or *Italian* whatever; y
their Muſic kept within Bounds, nor ever attempted
metamorphoſe the whole *Drama* into an *Opera*. Th
Spectator has been right in his Cenſure of this *monſtro*
Entertainment. *It does not* (ſays he) *want any gre*
Meaſure of Senſe to ſee the Ridicule of this monſtro
Practice (*that is*, *of ſinging partly* Engliſh, *and part*
Italian); *but it is not the Taſte of the Rabble*, *but of t*
Perſons of the greateſt Politeneſs, *which has eſtabliſh'd it*.

He ſhou'd have ſaid, Perſons of the greateſt *Qua*
lity; for certainly *Politeneſs* cannot be the Share
thoſe who indulge an *Abſurdity*, which he confeſſe
wants but a little Meaſure of Senſe to diſcover.

But then I think nothing can be more abſurd, tha
his preferring the ridiculous Qualities of an *Opera* a
ter the *Italian*, to that after the Way of *Harry Purc*
He laughs at the *Singing Superſcriptions of Letters*, *Gen*
rals Singing the Word of Command; *Ladies Delivering*
Meſſage in *Muſic*, and the like, of which every *Ital*
an Opera is full. *But however* (ſays he) *this* Italia
Way of Acting in Recitativo, *might appear at firſt Hea*
ring

ing, I cannot but think it much more just, than that which prevailed in our English *Opera's before this Innovation. The Transition from the* Air *to the* Recitativo *Musick being more natural than the passing from a Song to plain and ordinary Speaking, which was the common Method in* Purcel's *Opera's.* This, to make Sense of it, and render it of a Piece with what went before, requires all the Art of the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, *Guardian*. For how can that be said to be more natural than any thing, which is in all its Parts entirely unnatural. Then what does he mean by the Transition from Speaking to Musick in *Harry Purcel's Opera's*? In them, what was proper for Musick, was sung, and the *Drama* performed as all other *Drama's* were. The same might be said of the Tragedies of *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and the rest of the Ancients; when the *Actors* came to a pause, the *Chorus* sung, and when the *Chorus* had done singing, the *Actors* spoke again: And would this Author perswade any one in his Senses, that the *Modern Opera's* had a more natural Transition than the *Greek* Tragedies?

For my Part (interrupted Mrs. *Lamode*) I have so humble an Opinion of my self, as to think, that what pleases every Body, at least, the People of *Fashion*, ought to please me; and I have this Satisfaction, to find an Abundance of Pleasure in erring with all my Acquaintance. For that I may not be deceiv'd in my Opinion of a Play or Opera, I never go to either, till I hear a Character of them from some of my Friends, and know how it takes with the Town. The Particulars sometimes the obliging Mr. *Trifle* does me the Favour of conveying to me, and sometimes my dear *Issachar*; and what pleases most, I always like to be best.

I profess (assum'd *Trifle*) I think your Ladyship infinitely in the Right. I always do the very same. I am content to leave the *Critics* the surly Satisfaction of being pleas'd with nothing that is not Two Thousand Years old; the regular, stiff Pieces of the *Ancients*

ents; the Rules and Forms of an *old dull Philoſopher* who never underſtood Gayety and Gallantry; *Ariſtotle* with his *Sophocles*, and I know not what *Greek* Stuff refuſe me.

Admirably rally'd my Dear Mr. *Triſte* (aſſuming Mrs. *Lamode* laughing) give me the *Wit* and *Poetry* of a fashionable Turn, *fine Things* and *fine Language*. For dear *Laudon*, there's a Mode of *Wit* and *Poetry*, as well as of *Cloaths*; and he or ſhe, that is out of the *Faſhion*, makes a very ridiculous Figure, and is very *ſcandalous Company*. Wou'd it not be a very pretty Sight to have a young Lady come into the Drawing-Room in a *Ruff*, and *Farthingal*? *London*, and *Athens* are quite different Places, and the Modes, and Manners of the People differ ſo much, that what was bright and pleaſing in *Athens*, muſt be dull, and inſipid in *London*.

Laudon (purſu'd *Iſſachar*) don't you think, that my Spouſe has ſpoken like an Oracle? The *Critics* have not thought enough on this Point. I have been bred at the *Univerſity* my ſelf, and I have read the Antients, and I profeſs, I can't diſcover thoſe killing Beauties which the Affectation of the *Critics* pretends to find in them. I vow I can't help thinking that *Cowley* is finer than *Ovid*, and the *Arthurs* as good as *Homer*, or *Virgil*. Nor can I ſee any Reaſon why our *Dramatic* Poets are not more valuable than *Sophocles*, or *Euripides*. All the Advantage theſe have, is, that they liv'd a great while ago, and that they writ in *Greek*. What ſay you, fair Lady (concluded he to *Moriſina*) I am ſure you can never admire thoſe *Heathen Poets* whom you do not underſtand, above our own *Countrymen*, whom you do.

I find ſo many Reaſons (reply'd *Moriſina*) to diſlike thoſe, whom I do underſtand, that I fancy I ſhould have as many to like thoſe whom I do not underſtand, eſpecially when I find the Accounts the Learned give of them (in the Languages I know) and the Obſervations drawn from the *Antients* by them, again

the *Abſurdities* of our modern *Poets* ſo agreeable to *Nature* and *Reaſon*. As for your Ladyſhip's *Mode* and *Faſhion* of *Wit*, it may, perhaps, hold of the *Poems* of our Time; for we ſeldom find, that they keep up their eaſily acquir'd Reputation more than one Seaſon. But as the preſent Duke of *Buckingham* has it in his admirable *Eſſay on Poetry*.

True Wit is everlaſting like the Sun.

And to ſhew your Ladyſhip, that your Simile of *Ruffs*, and *Farthingal's*, will be little Proof of what you urg'd it for; you muſt remember, that *Shakeſpear's* Wit holds in Faſhion ſtill, though of the ſame Date with thoſe Ornaments of Dreſs, which wou'd now appear ſo very ridiculous. Time, that has ſo often chang'd our Modes of Apparel, and made the ſame Things ſo often *modiſh* and *antiquated*, has only added Force, Reſpect, and Authority to the *true Wit* of One Hundred and Fifty Years ſtanding. As we find this beyond Diſpute in *Shakeſpear*, ſo the ſame will hold good of thoſe great Maſters of *Poetry* among the Antients of *Rome*, and *Athens*; who have in all Times, and all Nations (as ſoon as underſtood) kept up, nay encreas'd their Eſteem, and Value, whilſt every thing elſe chang'd: Imperial Families, Kingdoms, whole Nations, and People have periſhed or alter'd their *Modes*, *Forms*, and *Languages*.

And as for your Ladyſhip's *fine Things*, and *fine Language*, to prefer theſe to more charming, and more eſſential Excellencies, wou'd be as ridiculous, as to prefer your Ladyſhip's *Dreſs* to your *Perſon*: A Complement, I dare believe, that you wou'd not think ſo gallant, as the *Mode* and *Faſhion* require. It is indeed, in ſome *Poems*, and ſome ſort of *Poetry* the moſt valuable Part; but then that ſort is of the moſt *inferiour* Rank, and full of the moſt baſe *Allay*; as perhaps the Men may really think *ſome Women* of *leſs* Value than their *Cloaths*.

Nor am I ſurpriz'd at the facetious Mr. *Triſſe's* humble Content in leaving the *Critics* the Satisfaction of being

being pleas'd with nothing but the regular Piece of *Antiquity*, and *the Rules and Forms of an old dotin Philosopher*; for I think that he ought to be consistent with himself, and no more approve of *Regularity* and *Order* in the Works of the *Poets*, than in his own Conduct, and Actions. Establish'd Customs, Habits and Inclinations easily bribe a weak Judgment to their side; and render every thing agreeable, that carries any Resemblance to themselves.

As for Mr. *Lamode*'s putting the modern *Authors* on a Foot with *Homer*, I am very confident, that the *admirable* Author of *the Creation*, has too much *Judgment*, and too much *Modesty*, to have any such Thought himself. Let it suffice, that the Author of the *Arthur* has the Glory of excelling *Lucretius*, it is a Palm gain'd only by him; but leave the Sovereignty of *Homer* untouch'd, even by *Milton* himself; who, I am afraid, in Justice with all his vast Imagination and Strength of Genius, will come in for no more than the *second Place*.

But, Madam, I wonder that your Ladyship, who value your self for the *grand Gousts* in all the fine Pleasures above every one else, shou'd be for *levelling* your Understanding with the very *Canaille*, the Gross of the Readers and Spectators, who not only fill up the House, but like the Shoe-maker of *Madrid* (as Madam *Dunois* tells you) dispos'd of the Fate of a Play. At this Rate you make your *Footman* in the Upper Gallery, as good a Judge as your self. An Affront invented by the Malice of a half-witted Enemy, cou'd never be more reproachful than what you wou'd here put on your self. But, dear Madam, I am so much your Friend, that I can never bear such an Indignity to your Sense, even from your own *fair Mouth*. Besides, if you allow the Applause of the Town to be the Test of what is *Good*, you must allow its *Neglect* or *Exploding* to be the Mark of the *Bad*; and then the very *same* thing must be *good* and *bad*, the *best*, and the *worst*, and the same Men in the *same*

Poem

Poem the moſt *excellent*, and the moſt *execrable* of Poets. To avoid Inſtances of living Authors, the *Mamamouche*, on its firſt Appearance, was acted a Month together, which muſt exalt it to the *higheſt Excellence*; but when it was reviv'd (as I am aſſur'd by thoſe who were at it) it was *hiſs'd* off the Stage; and ſo by the ſame Teſt became the *worſt* of *Farces*. Thus you wou'd make the *Orphan* yield to the *Empreſs of Morocco*, and the *Plain-dealer* to the *Quixots*, yet, Madam, I am confident your Ladyſhip will never prefer the *laſt* to the *firſt*.

You muſt therefore, Madam, for your own ſake, find out ſome ſurer Way of judging of the *leſſer Poems*, as well as of *Plays*, than that *Run*, and *Reception*, they meet with from the *Town*, which is ſo uncertain, and varying in the frail Praiſe ſhe bellows, that Poems have already loſt their Glory, and are become as great Drugs as *Quare*'s, and *Withers*, which for a while carry'd the Acclamations along with them: Nay, *Cowley* himſelf, ſo much ador'd for near Forty Years, loſes every Day Ground with all thoſe, who love *Nature*, and *Harmony*, which are Virtues not very common in that *learned* and *witty Perſon*.

Here the bright *Moriſina* made an End, diſcovering as many Charms in her Soul, as Eyes. Theſe may, perhaps, be equall'd by many of her Sex; but a Taſte ſo fine, ſhe enjoys almoſt without a Rival. Mrs. *Lamode* was confounded, and diſmay'd, and cou'd ſcarce muſter up Spirits enow to deſire her to point out a better Method of judging, than the *Opinion* of the *Town*. But Dinner now coming in, ſuſpended her Reply.

After our Repaſt was over, and the *Tea* on the Table, Mrs *Lamode* renew'd her Requeſt to *Moriſina* to correct her Error, and give her a more infallible Method of judging juſtly of the *Poets Performance*, than the Applauſe they meet with from the *Town*.

Madam (anſwer'd *Moriſina*) I know your Ladyſhip is an admirable Artiſt at your Needle, and I have with Wonder ſeen you rival *Nature*, when with

that

that you paint the Flowers of the Field, the Branches of the Woods, the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts and Reptiles of the Earth. Now, Madam, wou'd you allow the Judgment of your *Groom*, your *Plowman*, or your *Cook-Maid*, or even of your Tenants in the Villages about you to decide the Merit of your Performance? Wou'd you not, on their Condemnation of your Work, appeal to thoſe, who are skilful in the Art? And vindicate what you have done by ſhewing the ſeveral Stitches to be regular, and according to *Art*; that the Colours are juſtly mingled, inſinuating themſelves into each other with ſo nice a *Subtilty*, that it wou'd be a difficult Matter to point out their *Separation*, or ſay, where the Union begins or where it ends? That the Diſpoſition of the Parts is to the beſt Advantage, and *Nature* in the Whole ſo well diſſembled, that it muſt be a very curious Eye, that can diſtinguiſh the Copy from the Original? Such a Piece, Madam, as your Ladyſhip ſhew'd me, the laſt Time I did my ſelf the Honour of waiting on you?

True (my dear *Moriſina*, anſwer'd Mrs. *Lamode*) I had the Mortification to hear *Abigail* prefer an old, wild, antiquated Piece of Work of the Days of good Queen *Beſs* to that, which you ſo much admir'd. I aſk'd the *ſilly Creature*, how ſhe cou'd like ſuch gaudy Stitches, without Beauty, or Order, or prefer it to mine, which was according to the niceſt Samplars, and made ſuch near Approaches to Nature? The wretched Creature reply'd, that there was *ſomething* ſhe did *not know what* of Antiquity in the other that made it venerable. That ſhe did not know the *Art*, or the Nicety of the Stitches, and happy Mixture of the Colours, and the like; but her Eye was much more pleas'd with a *Je ne ſcay quoyiſh* Beauty of the old Piece without Order, Beauty, or Harmony of the Parts, than with all the Correſpondence and *Ordonance* of mine. I ſwear, my dear, the dull Creature put me into a Paſſion, I cou'd almoſt have broke

broken her Fingers with my Fan. I am vext, that the *inſignificant* Thing cou'd ruffle me ſo much.

Oh! my dear *Lamode* (cry'd *Moriſina*) I have ſurpriz'd you into my Party: For my Dear, you muſt pardon me, you play the Part of *Abigail* your ſelf, and declaim againſt the *Rules* of *Art*, and cry up the wild and confus'd Productions of *blind Fancy*, like *Abigail*'s darling *Antique*, before a *beautiful Piece*, which like your Ladyſhip's Work, derives an admirable *Order*, and *Harmony* from the Obſervation of, and following the Lineaments of *Nature*, taught by the *Rules of* the *Art* of *Poetry*. For, Madam, *Poetry* in all its Parts, is an *Imitation*: Propoſing therefore a *certain End*, it muſt have certain Means of attaining that End, which are the *Rules* of *Art*, as your Ladyſhip obſerves in guiding your curious Needle, through the Flowers, and Foliage of your Work. The general *Judgment* of the *Town*, is like your *Abigail*'s, made and form'd on *Je-ne-ſcay-Quoys*, they *Know-not-what*, their *beautiful Extravagancies*, and many ſuch empty Sounds which have no manner of Idea fixt to them.

Well, well, fair *Moriſina* (ſaid Mrs. *Lamode*) if you have any better Way of judging, I beg you let us hear it; I vow I ſhall be ſurprifingly pleas'd with the inſtructing Amuſement from ſo charming a Mouth.

Madam (aſſum'd *Tom Triſle* with a pert Inſipidneſs) your Ladyſhip is infinitely in the Right, for Madam *Moriſina*, I vow to Gad is the fineſt Amuſement in the World,

That's a Taſk too difficult (return'd *Moriſina*) for me to undertake, I ſhall leave that to my Spouſe, and to his Friend *Gamaliel*.

No, no, my Dear (aſſum'd Mrs *Lamode*) I never will conſent to that, but as you have found Fault with my *Rule* of judging, pray do me the Juſtice to produce your own, *Lundon*, and his Friend will perfectly confound us with *Ariſtotle*, and a Thouſand hard *Greek* Names. And for my Part, I have a mor-

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tal *Averſion* to all *Greeks*, and *Romans*, whom I do not underſtand. I may, perhaps, allow you ſomething of the *French*, or the *Italian*, and in Caſe of Neceſſity, perhaps, a *Spaniard*: But for your *Ariſtotle*, and your *Horace*'s, I know not what to ſay to them: They have reign'd long enough; it is Time to put an End to their Authority.

You muſt (aſſum'd *Laudon*) firſt put an End to *Nature*, and extinguiſh *all Senſe* in Mankind. A new Model in *Poetry* muſt be monſtrouſly abſurd, and a wretched Refuge of ignorant *Poetaſters* to ſhelter their own Follies from Cenſure. Thus *Lopez de Vega* undertook to write a New Art of *Poeſie*, but he ſucceeded ſo ill in his Undertaking, that the Book has not been thought worthy to be Printed with the reſt of his Works. *Cornielle* attempted the ſame in *France*, but what his Succeſs was, his own Countryman, the admirable *Dacier* (to ſay nothing of the *Academy of Sciences*) will diſcover by a Confutation of his Errors, with that Clearneſs, and good Judgment, that the Faults of *Corneilles* Plays (to remove which he ſet up thoſe *New* Rules) remain, and *Ariſtotle* preſerves his Reputation entire with all Men of *ſize Senſe*, and *ſound Underſtanding*.

Horace firſt propoſed this juſt Model (as a judicious *French* Author juſtly calls it) to the *Romans*, and the great Men of the Court of *Auguſtus* follow'd them as inviolable. After the taking of *Conſtantinople* by the *Turks*, many of the *Greek Authors* were tranſported to *Italy* by the Care, and Intereſt of *Coſmo* and *Lorenzo di Medici* (the great Reſtorers of ancient Learning, and Politeneſs after the long Night of *Gothick* and *Monkiſh* Ignorance and Barbarity) who were follow'd by ſeveral learned Men, who reviv'd and ſet up Schools of the then forgotten *Greek* Language. Hence ſoon aroſe a Multitude of Commentators on theſe admirable *Rules* of *Ariſtotle*, of whom *Piccolomini*, and *Caſſelvetro* had the beſt Succeſs. Father *Bapin* building on them, excell'd the *Italians*. But

Mr.

Mr. *Dacier* has gone far beyond all others of any Nation in his Notes on this excellent Treatiſe of the *Philoſopher*; *Laudon* had not quite done when *Tyro* came in with *Manilia*.

Ah! cry'd out Mrs. *Lamode*, my Dear *Manilia*, you are the moſt welcome Perſon alive; and you, Mr. *Tyro*, you come to the Relief of the diſtreſs'd *Damoiſel*; I am beſieg'd with *Giants*, and only your Prowеſs can bring me Relief.

The Matter, the Matter (ſaid *Tyro*) I am always Devote to the Ladies, eſpecially when in Diſtreſs. But how you can be ſo in the Company of my Friend *Laudon*, I can't imagine, who is the moſt complaiſant Man in the World to the Fair Sex. *Moriſina* is ſuch a Bibe, that muſt always retain *Laudon* in the Ladies Cauſe.

Ah, Mr. *Tyro!* (cry'd Mrs. *Lamode*) *Laudon* has declar'd againſt me, and *Moriſina* is the moſt violent Enemy I have. They have eſpous'd the Cauſe of the *Critics*, to whom I confeſs a mortal Averſion.

Nothing but a *Jeu de Eſprit*, I dare be confident (aſſum'd *Tyro*) *Laudon* is a Man of too gay a Taſte to eſpouſe ſeriouſly the Cauſe of *Sowerneſs*, and ill *Nature*. It is a particular Obſervation I have always made, that of all Mortals, a Critic is the ſillieſt.

That is (interrupted *Laudon*) of all Mortals, a Man of *Judgment* and *Skill* in *Art* is the ſillieſt. For if you mean pretended *Criticks*, you ſhou'd have told us ſo. Now as to *Pretenders* to any *Art*, or *Thing*, without Foundation, they are equally ſilly, for it is want of Underſtanding in them all. The drawing a ridiculous Character, and then calling it a *Critic*, is of no manner of Force againſt the *Thing*.

Ah! my Dear Friend *Laudon* (reply'd *Tyro*) you have intercepted what I had to ſay from the charming *Tatler* on this Head; for when he has told you that a *Critic* is the ſillieſt of Mortals, he adds his Reaſon; *for* (ſays he) *by inuring himſelf to examine*

all

all Things, whether they are of Conſequence or not, be never looks upon any thing, but with a Deſign of paſſing venge upon it; by which means he is never a Compa but always a Cenſor. This makes him earneſt upon Tri and Diſpute on the moſt indifferent Occaſions with V mence. If he offers to ſpeak or write, that Talent, w ſhou'd approve the Work of the other Faculties prevents t Operation. He comes upon Action in Armour, but with Weapons; he ſtands in Safety, but can gain no Glory.

And a little after — *A* thorough Critic *is a ſar* Puritan *in the* polite World. *As an* Enthuſiaſt *in* religion *ſtumbles at the ordinary Occurrences of Life, if* cannot *quote Scripture Examples on the Occaſion; ſo* Critic *is never ſafe in his Speech or Writing, withou has among the celebrated Writers an Authority for* Truth *of his Sentence.*

You need go no farther (ſaid *Laudon*) 'tis only very dry ridiculſe on the Character, without the le Shadow of Reaſon. But Mr. *Iſaac*, notwithſtandi his Paſſion againſt *Critics*, has play'd the *Critic* hi ſelf, not only in his eighth and ninth *Tatler*, but i ſeveral others; nay, indeed his whole Buſin ſeems to be a *Critic* on the Manners of Men; a ha der thing to determine, than the *Rules* of *Art*; w leſs he would ſhelter himſelf under the Name of *C ſor*, which is one, who paſſes Judgment on ſom thing, and ſo comes to the ſame Point. But here cannot omit one thing, which I find he attacks m than once in the Courſe of his Writings; and whic I am afraid his Enemies will ſay diſcovers him be a moſt abanded *Pedant*. And this is that *Critics* guide themſelves by what they find in *French* Writers, without being capable of going high as the Original *Greek* or *Latin* Maſters. I am ſorry I muſt allow to be a ſort of Refuge of *dantry*, as if there were really any *ſingular* Merit to the *Art*, to underſtand *Greek* or *Latin*. No M certainly can condemn the Reaſon of what we fi in *French*; and yet it is the *Reaſon* of the thing,

ot the Language it is written in, that makes it va-uable. But in Oppoſition to the *Spectators*, and *Tat-rs*, frequent Cenſure of the *French Critics*. I muſt ob-erve firſt, that ſo great a Poet, and Judge of Poetry, s my Lord *Roſcommon* had no ſuch Opinion of the rench Writers, in his Eſſay on tranſlated Verſe.

When France *had breath'd after inteſtine Broils,*
And Peace, and Conqueſt, crown'd her foreign Toils:
There (cultivated by a Royal Hand)
Learning grew faſt, and ſpread, and bleſt the Land.
The choiceſt Books, that Rome *or* Greece *have known,*
Her excellent Tranſlators made their own.
And Europe *muſt acknowledge that ſhe Gains,*
Both by their good Example, and their Pains.

I muſt ſecondly remark, that they have preſerv'd oliteneſs in all their Learning. *Boſſu*, and *Dacier* rite like Gentlemen, and Men of a *fine Taſte*, tho' erfectly ſkill'd in all the neceſſary *Criticiſms* of the *reek* and *Roman* Language; whereas *Voſſius*, (I mean *errard*, not *Iſaac*, who is much more polite) *Scali-er*, and many of our *Engliſh* Men of Learning, have o far loſt themſelves in *verbal Criticiſms*, or in mere ollections of Opinions, that they never diſtinguiſh *nely*, and ſeldom obſerve further; but give us Au-hority on Authority, in a ſtiff, dry, jujune Manner, ithout drawing any valuable Doctrine from what ey have taken the Pains to give from the Antients. he *French*, on the contrary, burthen not our *Memo-ies*, nor confound our *Judgments*, by Multiplicity of uotations, but give us the ſolid Doctrine they have awn from them, and the inſuperable Reaſons on hich they are founded. They dwell not on the eer *grammatical Criticiſms* on Words, but penetrate rther into the *Reaſons*, and *Senſe*, and *Judgment* of he Authors; and give us Light out of Obſcurity, hich ſome have involv'd the Antients in. What eaſon therefore has any Man to object, as an Odium,

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our conſulting the *French* Authors, when he, or h
Collegues, ſhall write like them: I dare engage t
Ingenious will be oblig'd to them, and conſult the
without the *French*. There is nothing ſo trifling a
ridiculous as the Praiſes given *Homer*, *Virgil*, &c. b
the *Dutch*, moſt of the *Italian*, and *Engliſh* Writer
but *Boſſu* and *Dacier*, to the Honour of their Countr
enter'd into the true Merits of thoſe great Poets
their Deſign, &c. *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſeus* indeed,
long ago has hit right in praiſing *Homer*'s Contr
vance, and Deſign, as well as the Greatneſs, and M
jeſty, of his Expreſſion, and the lively and paſſion
ate Motions of the Sentiments. But I think you L
dies ought to declare againſt them, and all others, whe
they are for depriving you of all Reſource, by co
fining all Knowledge to *Greek* and *Latin*, Languag
you are not ſo familiar with as *French*.

Nay, I confeſs (ſaid Mrs. *Lamode*) I am not of h
Party in that, I am a profeſs'd admirer of the Fre
Tongue, and whoever runs that down, I ſhall decla
againſt him.

As for what Tongue it is in (aſſum'd *Manilia*) i
matters not, but *Criticiſm* it ſelf is the thing that t
Tatler falls upon; and good Lord, indeed, what a F
gure does Sir *Timothy Tittle* make in the *Tatlers*? O
would think, that no Man of *Wit*, wou'd ever aſſ
that, have deſcended to own the Name of a *Critic*.

Oh! Madam (ſaid *Laudon*) there is nothing mo
eaſie, than for a Groteſque Painter to clap Aſſes E
on the Head of a *Socrates*, yet that wou'd betray th
Ignorance, *Folly*, or *Impudence* of the Painter, but n
any Defect in that wiſe *Athenian*. If the *Tatler* de
ſign'd by thoſe, and ſome other Stroaks of the li
Nature, to ridicule *Criticaſters*, and impudent Pret
ders to *Judgment*, he ſhou'd not have endeavour
to affix the Infamy he deſign'd to the Name of *Cri*
but have plainly, and evidently diſtinguiſh'd b
tween them; otherwiſe the Aſſes Ears will cleave
his own Head, for ridiculing *Judgment*, witho
which

hich nothing ever was, or ever can be, well and ſtly perform'd either in *Painting* or *Poetry*.

Bleſs me! (cry'd *Manilia*) you infinitely ſurprize e to hear you oppoſe the Sentiments of a Paper that raviſh'd the Town, and almoſt reconcil'd *Parties* in Praiſe, that were oppoſite in every thing elſe. ow ſhall we, *poor Women*, direct our Judgments, if ſuch celebrated Guides, we are led aſtray?

By *Reaſon*, and *Nature*, Madam (reply'd *Laudon*) r it is only when theſe Authors deſert them, that ey become contemptible to the *judicious*.

Well, but (ſaid *Tyro*) if you will not allow the uthority of the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and the like, I ope you will yield to that of Sir *William Temple*.

For my Part (reply'd *Laudon*) I cannot allow any an's *Authority* againſt *Reaſon* and *Truth*; and if Sir *illiam* has advanc'd any thing that is ſo, I ſhall ake no Scruple in diſſenting from him.

It is in his *Eſſay upon Poetry* (aſſum'd *Tyro*) and fter he has given his Sentiments at large, he draws owards a Concluſion in theſe Words, againſt the *ules*, on which your *Criticiſm* is built. *The Truth is* ſays he) *there is ſomething in the Genius of* Poetry *oo libertine to be confin'd to ſo* many Rules, *and whoever oes about to ſubject it to ſuch Conſtraints, loſes both its* ſpirit *and* Grace, *which are ever Native, and never earned out of the beſt Maſters.* Then he concludes this Point againſt the *French*, and our *Critics*, in theſe Words. *It wou'd be too much Mortification to theſe great rbitrary Rulers among the* French *Writers, and our own, o obſerve the worthy Productions, that have been form'd y their* Rules; *the Honour they have receiv'd in the World, or the Pleaſure they have given Mankind. But to omfort them, I do not know that there was any great Poet n* Greece, *after the Rules of that Art laid down by* Ariſtotle; *nor in* Rome, *after thoſe by* Horace, *which yet none of our Moderns pretend to have outdone. Perhaps* Theocritus *and* Lucan *may be alledg'd againſt this Aſſertion; but the firſt offer'd no farther than his Idyls or*

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Eclogues, and the laſt, tho' he muſt be own'd for a m and happy Genius, and to have made ſome very h Flights, yet he is too unequal to himſelf, and his Muſe too young, that his Faults are too noted to allow his P tences. --- After all, the utmoſt that can be atchiev'd any Rules in this Art, *is but to hinder ſome Men from b ing very ill Poets, but not to make any one a very good on*

I think, that what Sir *William* has here urg'd, is plain againſt your *Rules*, and *triticiſms*, as any thin in the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, or the reſt.

I grant it (reply'd *Laudon*) but with no more *Re ſon*, than thoſe Authors have built on; nay, wit this Diſadvantage, that Sir *William* either groſſ contradicts himſelf, or makes uſe of Words, whic have no manner of Meaning at all, which alon wou'd be ſufficient to deſtroy his *Authority* with an indifferent Judge. Let us therefore hear Sir *Willia* in his own proper Perſon, and in the very ſame *Eſſ*

But though Invention *be the Mother of* Poetry, y *this Child is like all others born naked, and muſt be nu riſh'd with Care, cloath'd with Exactneſs, and Elegan educated with Induſtry*, inſtructed *with* Art, *improv'd Application, corrected with* Severity, *and accompliſh with Labour, and Time; before it arrives at any gre Perfection or Growth, it is certain that no Compoſition re quires ſo many ſeveral Ingredients, and of more differe Sorts, than this: Nor that to excel in any Qualities, the are neceſſary ſo many Gifts of Nature, and ſo many Im provements of* Learning *and* Art. Again --- *Without the Force of* Wit, *all* Poetry *is flat, and languiſhing, without the Succours of* Judgment, *it is wild, and extra vagant.*

Here you find Sir *William* denying Perfection to *Poetry* without it be inſtructed by *Art*; but if he mea any thing by *Art*, he means what every Body in the World means by it, that ever made uſe of that Word on any Occaſion. Now every *Art* in its very Conſtitution propoſes ſome certain *End* to obtain, and ſome certain *Means* of obtaining that *End*; but the

Mean

ns in the *Art* of *Poetry*, as well as in all others, what we call the Rules of the *Art*. So that to of the Neceſſity of *Art*, and at the ſame time llow of its *Rules* is down-right Nonſenſe; or, propoſing an *End*, without any *Means* of attaining *End*, which is equally abſurd and ridiculous. he wou'd aſcribe all to *Fancy* in Poetry, to what poſe all this Pomp of Expreſſion, in the diſplay- the other neceſſary Qualities of a Poet to arrive Perfection? What mean the nouriſhing it with ; cloathing it with *Exactneſs* and *Elegance*; edu- ng it with *Induſtry*; inſtructing it with *Art*; roving it with Application; but above all, cor- ng it with *Severity*? What muſt *Fancy* be ſevere *ancy*? Muſt the Heat of *Fancy* be accompliſh'd h Labour and Time? What will *Fancy*, without *gment*, be wild and extravagant, and yet no *Rules* rect this wild and extravagant Quality of *Wit*? if all theſe Pains are to be taken to regulate the , or *Genius* of *Poetry*; is not this to confine it *ertain Rules*? Or is it to be confin'd, and not in'd; regulated by *Judgment*, and yet free from Curb? Theſe are the Contradictions of the Ene- s of the *Rules*. Or is the *Judgment* to be without certain Direction, and only the effect of the par- ar Writer's Notion, who is correcting his own k? But how will Sir *William*, or any Advocate his, diſtinguiſh between *Fancy* and *Judgment* in Matter, and ſhew where their Duties are bound- What is their Diſtinction, and how we ſhall w the Acts of the one from the other without g ſome *Rules*? But if they find themſelves re- d to a Neceſſity of making ſome Standard of *Judg-* let them ſhew that the *Fancy* or *Genius* will be confin'd by them, than by thoſe already in Force, acknowledge by all the learned of all Nations 2000 Years. I am afraid that his *Rules* which ire ſo much *Application* and *Severity*, are as likely nake *Poetry* loſe its *Spirit*, and *Grace*, as thoſe of

Ariſto-

Ariſtotle, and the reſt of the *Critics*, So that if *Genius of the* Poetry *have ſomething too libertine it, to be confin'd to ſo* many Rules, *and that who goes about to ſubject it to ſuch Conſtraints, loſes both* Spirit, *and* Grace, *which are ever Native, and never be learned of any Maſter.* Then what becomes of *nouriſhing, cloathing, inſtructing, correcting*, and the li

Thus you ſee by what *Contradictions* and *Abſurd* this worthy *Eſſayiſt* is embaraſs'd in his Declama againſt the *Rules* of *Art*. *But the Champions of Rules have given the World nothing* admirable *and* en taining. That is falſe, if juſtly conſider'd acc ing to the *Genius* of the Nation, that have wri regularly and irregularly. Let us take *France*, wh he attacks. Are the *regular* Pieces of that People m valuable. than thoſe which are *irregular*, and on contrary? Are not *Boileau*, *Racine*, and the like, m entertaining to them than *Alexander Hardy*, *du Ba* or the like? I think all *France* will give the Pri the former; and if ſo, how have the *Rules* inj the *Poetical Productions* of *France*? Nay, *Corneilla* hi ſelf, when he began to write after the Model of *H dy*, found by his own good Senſe, that *Rules* were ceſſary; and before he had inform'd his Underſta ing, by the Study of *Ariſtotle*, he form'd ſome ge ral Precepts to guide his *Fancy* from thoſe *Abſurdi* into which his Predeceſſor fell for want of ſuch He

But no great Poet appeared in Greece *or* Rome, *a the Publication of the Rules of* Ariſtotle *and* Hor This is begging the Queſtion with a Vengeance; a I wonder that Sir *William*, who appeals to the 600 Volumes loſt in the *Ptolemaic* Library, againſt *Moderns*, in his firſt Eſſay, ſhould pronounce ſo d matically in this Point, ſince it is as certain, t many great Poets, as well as other Authors, peri either there, or in the Havock of Time. But w does he think of *Menander* and all the Authors of *new Comedy*, given us, in ſome Meaſure, by *Plau* and by *Terence*? Or is it probable, that *Athens*, wh

ver encouraged *Tragedy* more than *Comedy*, had no *ragic* Poets of Worth after *Euripides*, *Agatho*, *Polydes*, nd the reſt that preceded *Ariſtotle*? But the moſt nlucky thing that could befal this Inſtance of our ſſayer, is that *Virgil*, *that ſupreme Genius*, was after *riſtotle*, coemporary with *Horace*, and as well ac-nainted with the *Fountain* of *Criticiſm*, as *Horace* him-elf; nay, and has viſibly obſerved the Rules of *Ari-otle*, in his *Æneis*. After this, what need we look nto a bare Liſt of Names of ſeveral eminent *Poets* hat liv'd after *Horace*, tho' their Works be loſt? Vhat may we think of *Varius* and *Tucca*, to whom *irgil* ſubmitted his Works? Were they ignorant of he Rules which *Virgil* follow'd? Muſt we, becauſe he Works of many more, and thoſe eminent in their ime, are periſh'd, conclude they were not good Po-s? That wou'd prove that all thoſe who have each'd our Days are good, and that would eſtabliſh *ucan* in ſpite of what the Knight has ſaid againſt im. For if, in Reality, *Lucan* be not a good Poet, is becauſe he has not follow'd the ſame Rules that *irgil* did. The ſame may be ſaid of *Statius*, *Silius alicus*, and ſome other *Roman* Authors that are ſtill tant, and yet never thought good Poets by the ju-icious Part of the World, in any Nation where they ave found Readers.

Painting is an Art that requires a *Genius*, and yet nnot be juſtly perform'd without the Rules of Art. he Proportion of a Man ſtanding upright, is eight imes the Length of his Head: The Arms hanging raight down, reach within a Span of the Knee: Hand muſt be the Length of the Face, and the rms extended make the juſt Length of the whole ody. Theſe, and an Hundred more Rules muſt be nown to, and follow'd by every Painter, tho' of ne-r ſo exalted a *Genius*, or *Guſto*, which can never ſtify him in breaking any of the Rules; for thoſe Paintin-, as well as thoſe of Poetry, are Nature, d ſhew us its juſt Lineaments, by which every

Judge may know the *Excellence* or *Defect* of the Per former.

Thus in *Landskip* the Painter ought to be ſkill'd in Perſpective, elſe can he never know the Proportions in regard of the Diſtances, and the like. The knowing of thoſe Rules alone will not make a Painter without both a Genius and Practice; and in the ſame Manner, the Rules of Poetry are neceſſary to the forming all valuable Poems, but they are not able to make a Poet without Genius and Practice too.

In all the fine Arts indeed, there has a *Groteſque* and *Gothique* Taſte prevail'd, which reliſhes every thing that is not natural. Thus, in general, we prefer the *Japan* Pictures for the Furniture of our Rooms to the fine Prints of the *Audrands*, *Simoneans*, *Edlinabs* and the reſt of the great Maſters; and by the ſame abandon'd *Guſto*, we encourage *Opera's* and *Farces*, before *Comedies* and *Tragedies*.

A modern Wit has a very great Averſion to Arts and Sciences, and with an Air of Sufficience, avows his Zeal for *Ignorance*. But as his Fancy only governs him, ſo are his Productions moſt commonly ſad crude, indigeſted things, *like ſick Mens Dreams*, without either Head or Tail. If you chance to mention *Art*, he cries out, you are a *Critic*, an *ill-natur'd Perſon*; that Nature is not to be ty'd up to *Order*, *Harmony*, *Beauty* of Deſign; as if *Confuſion* were the only Perfection. When they ſpeak of a *Play*, the higheſt Praiſe they give it, in their Approbation, is, that it is *fine Language*, like Mr. *Wycherly* s Lover, that could find nothing about his Miſtreſs to praiſe, but the *Tip* of her Ear, and her *Elbow*. So that moſt of our ſucceſsful *Poets* ought to be aſhamed of the Applauſe they obtain, as *Lucian* was when he wrote his *Zeuxis*, finding it to be paid to the Novelty, and Neatneſs of the Expreſſion, and not to the Judgment of his Method, and the like.

But our *Wits* and *Lucian* are not of a Piece. I would fain know of them whethe. *Architecture*, *Statuary*, *Muſic*,

Muſic, can be excell'd in by any one who is not a perfect Maſter of the eſtabliſh'd Rules of either of them? And then I will yield, that Perfection in *Poetry* may be attain'd without knowing any thing of the Art.

The *Tatler* has been pleaſed to call the *Critics*, *Puritans*, whereas they are of the eſtabliſhed Church; but the Gentlemen that are againſt them, are the true Fanaticks in Poetry, againſt *Order* and *Decency*, the Effect of it.

It is, as I have obſerved, urged againſt Criticiſm, or the Rules of *Art*, that a too regular Adherence to the Forms and Meaſures of them, is a Reſtraint on a Writer's *Invention*, and does more Harm than Good in Compoſition. For that the Imagination cannot ſo freely diffuſe and expand it ſelf, when it is oblig'd to any Bounds or Limits whatever. This Argument is ſometimes illuſtrated and ſupported by that famous Example of an ungovernable Genius in *Heroic* Virtue; I mean *Alexander* the *Great*, whoſe vaſt Ambition never fail'd to hurry him beyond the due Meaſures of Conduct, upon which very Account, ſay they, his Exploits had always in them ſomething wonderfully ſurprizing and aſtoniſhing. Whereas, *Ceſar*'s Actions, that were more cool, deliberate, and proportion'd to the Rules of Prudence and Policy, never give us ſuch a ſublime, exalted Idea of his Fortitude, as we muſt neceſſarily entertain of the *Greek* Heroes. The Friends too of our great Dramatic Writer *Shakeſpear* will not be perſwaded, but that even his monſtrous Irregularities were conducive to thoſe ſhining Beauties which abound in moſt of his Plays: And that if he had been more a Critic, he had been leſs a Poet; that is, if he had known more of Nature (which only the Rules teach) he would have touch'd it leſs. But I ſay, that notwithſtanding this Pleaſure given by *Alexander*'s Deeds, good Conduct in War is no Hindrance to the boldeſt Undertakings. For any one that knows Hiſtory, knows, that without it, *Ceſar*'s Atchievements had never been ſo glo-

rious, nor most of *Alexander*'s too. These astonishing ((I might call them accidental) Victories gain'd by the latter, betrayed (many of them at least) more of Foolhardiness than Valour. And a due Observation of natural Rules, that is, a strict Attendance to the *Rules* of *Nature* and Reason, can never embarrass or clogg an Author's Fancy, but rather enlarge and extend it. They might as well urge, that good and wholesome Laws that enjoin nothing but what a rational Nature would otherwise oblige us to, take away the Liberty of Mankind, whereas they are the very Life and Security of it.

But against Sir *William Temple*, the *Tatlers*, and other Enemies to the Rules, I shall give you the Opinion of a much greater Man, in his Way, I mean my Lord *Roscommon*, not only by his giving us a Version of the Art of Poetry of *Horace*, but from his *Essay on Translated Verse*, in the very first Lines.

Happy that Author whose correct Essay
Revives so well our old Horatian *Way*;
And happy those who (if concurring Stars
Predestinate them to Poetic Wars)
With Pains and Leisure by such Precepts write,
And learn to use their Arms before they fight.

For this Introduction is not only a just Commendation of the *Essay on Poetry*, which contains admirable Rules in that Art, but a Recommendation of Rules in general. And Mr. *Waller*, in his Verses before his Lordship's Translation of *Horace*'s *Art of Poetry*, tells us,

Britain *whose Genius is in Verse expresst,*
Bold and sublime, but negligently dresst.

Recommends the Study and Observation of the Rules to our Authors, which will shew the Art of *Criticism* to be the Art of inducing *proportion'd Wonders*, as *Waller* expresses it.

He that proportion'd Wonders can diſcloſe,
At once his Fancy and his Judgment ſhews.

For Fancy and Judgment muſt join in every great Poet, as Courage and Judgment in every great General; for where either is wanting, the other is uſeleſs, or of ſmall Value. Fancy is what we generally call *Nature*, or a *Genius*; *Judgment* is what we mean by Art, the Union of which in one Man makes a complete Poet.

I hope therefore (concluded *Laudon* to *Tyro*) that I have made a Convert of you from that Vague and inconſiſtent Notion to Regularity, Form, and Order, which is what the Rules pretend to teach, and not a *Genius*, which muſt indeed be born with you, or you will find but little Advantage from the Rules. Man might perhaps live without the Rules and Maxims of Government, but under all thoſe Inconveniences that muſt render Life as unpleaſant as unſecure, but by the Rules of Art (as I may call them) Men live in Society, with all the Harmony of Subordination; and every Part contributes to the Beauty of the Whole: So in Poetry, Nature may inform ſome one great *Genius* to give us ſome *fine Things*, as ſhe may inſpire ſome few Men to follow her Laws, in their wild, uncultivated Way of Living, like ſome of the *Weſt Indians*; but then even that one great Genius will be apt to abound in *monſtrous Abſurdities*, and *incongruous Extravagancies*, which can only be avoided by the conſtant and unalterable Rules of Reaſon.

Here *Laudon* gave over ſpeaking, and after a little Pauſe, *Tyro* made this Reply. I confeſs, that from what you have urg'd, there ſeems to me a Neceſſity of the Poet's propoſing to himſelf ſome Meaſures or Rules of Conduct in what he performs, which is the proper Taſk of *Judgment*. But I cannot from thence conclude, that therefore the arbitrary Dictates of every ſower Humour that uſurps the Authority of a *Critic*, ſhould be of any Force againſt a Poem that has receiv'd the general Applauſe of the World. When

I hear of any Piece of *Criticiſm*, I generally enquire for the Author's Name; and if he have not perform'd any thing himſelf, or not any thing well, and with the publick Approbation, I never give my ſelf the Trouble of reading him over.

And I (aſſum'd *Laudon*) when I find any Writing or Speaking againſt *Criticiſm*, preſently examine whether he has not written ſomething that, how ſucceſsful ſoever, will not ſtand the Teſt of Reaſon and Art. And I never once fail'd in finding, that his refuſing the Judgment of the Critic, was caus'd by the real Defect of his Writing, which was indeed qualify'd for the Vogue of the Town, but not for the Taſte of the Judicious. And therefore he diſown'd the Authority of the Court, becauſe he was ſure there to meet with Condemnation. The Rules of Criticiſm are known, and fixt by *Ariſtotle*, *Horace*, *Dacier*, *Boſſu*, and others; and tho' a Man may not have perform'd himſelf, yet by them he may be a very good Judge of another's Performance. As in Painting there are a great many Gentlemen, and Perſons of Diſtinction and Quality, who ſcarce ever drew a Stroke, who are very good Judges of the Performances of Painters, and can diſtinguiſh between the ſeveral Hands that have given us the nobleſt Pieces of Painting. So that I would never reject a Piece of Criticiſm for the Name of the Author, but for the Defect of what he advances; for if a new Author gives you Reaſon for what he ſays, you are obliged to ſubmit to the Determination, or to be an Enemy to Reaſon.

Another thing I muſt obſerve, is, that not one of theſe Gentlemen who profeſs their Enmity to, or Contempt of a true Critic, but has ſhewn himſelf a meer *Criticaſter*, when he has fallen upon the Subject; a meer *Piece-Broker* of *Parnaſſus*, and reaches no farther than Words and Sentences; dealing in the very Scraps of Poetry; a Couplet, an Expreſſion is the moſt he pretends to. But for a Deſign, or compleat Poem, to meddle with it, he accounts Pedantry, or Impoſition.

Ger.

Gerhard Voſſius, a Man of conſummate Learning, nd a very good *Critic*, is entirely againſt this Notion, n his Preface to his Poetical Inſtitutions. *Some*, per-aps (ſays he) *would wiſh, that a Work of this Nature ad been undertaken by ſome one that was admitted to the acred Office by the Muſes, who might before have been ſeen n their Temple inflam'd with the Poetical Enthuſiaſm. Had ny one made this Objection to* Lilius Giraldus *of* Ferrara, *he moſt learned of the* Italians *of his Age, when he wrote ome things of the Art of Poetry, and more on the Poets, he ould have anſwer'd in the ſame Words, which we find in is firſt Dialogue of his Hiſtory of the Poets.* "It is an " old Opinion of *Plato*, that thoſe have likewiſe a " Share in the Poetic Fire, who interpret the Verſes " of the Poets, and may therefore put in their Claim " to the Title of Poets. For *Panætus*, the Philoſopher, " for this Reaſon gave the Name of Prophet, or Po-" et, to *Ariſtarchus*, and *Athenæus* ſays the ſame. *Yet ould I not arrogate to my ſelf, for this Reaſon, the Poe-ic Fury or Genius*, and a little more to the ſame Pur-poſe. *But ſetting this aſide, I ſhall rather ſay, that no ne ought to write Poetically but Poets; but that the Subject f writing on the Nature and Rules of that Art, is rather he Buſineſs of a Philoſopher. For this I might quote* Ariſto-le, *who, tho' he was not a celebrated Poet, was, however, minent for his Knowledge of all Arts and Sciences, and han whom no one ever diſcover'd a greater Penetration and Accuracy in the Nature of every Kind of Poeſy. It is cer-ain, that he in thoſe Diſcoveries left thoſe great Poets* Horace *and* Vida *much behind him in Excellence, tho' they ain'd no ſmall Help from the Works of* Ariſtotle *on this Subject. Nor can I for the latter find a better Excuſe for heir falling ſhort of the Philoſopher, than that* Ariſtotle *almoſt exceeded the Bounds of human Capacity in his Un-derſtanding and Learning of every Kind; and that it is far more eaſy to write of the Rules of Art in Proſe, than in Verſe: To ſay nothing of the different Readers that they writ to, the Philoſopher to the ſubtil Wits of* Greece, *theſe to their Countrymen a little elevated above the Vulgar.*

Further, I muſt obſerve, that the Judges who were inſtituted to decide of Poetical Performances in Athens, Alexandria, *and* Rome, *were not ſo much eminent Poets, as Men who underſtood the Nature and Genius of Poetry*, &c.

This I think ſufficient to ſhew, on how falſe a Bottom that Maxim is built, which you, *Tyro*, introduced, tho' borrow'd from the *Spectators* or *Tatlers*, of reading, or not reading a *Critic*, as you heard whether he had, or had not written any thing himſelf. For that Rule would have rejected *Longinus* himſelf, on whom thoſe Papers ſeem to lay ſome Streſs. It may, I confeſs, be anſwered as to *Ariſtotle*, that he was a Poet as well as a Philoſopher, there being a traditionary Account, that he writ above 40000 Verſes. But it will hold of *Longinus*, and the Judges juſt quoted by *Voſſius*, as of *Lilius Giraldus*, and *Voſſius*, *Dacier*, and *Boſſu*; nay, and in ſome Meaſure, of *Ariſtotle*: For tho' there may be a Fragment of his Poetry yet extant, and tho' he might have written many Odes, Elegies, or the like, yet we do not find that ever he writ a *Tragedy*, or *Epic* Poem; and yet his Criticiſms are chiefly on thoſe two Kinds of Poeſy. But then *Horace* himſelf is againſt this falſe Notion, that none but a Poet ſhould criticize on a Poet, in his Art of *Poetry*, as Engliſhed by the Lord *Roſcommon*.

Yet without Writing I may teach to write,
Tell what the Duty of a Poet is;
Wherein his Wealth and Ornament conſeſs,
And how he may be form'd, &c.

Allowing what you have urg'd (ſaid *Tyro*) in the main, yet I ſee no Reaſon why we ſhould be wholly guided by the *Ancients*. The Moderns have the Advantage of having the Works of the *Ancients*, and therefore ſhould excel them. The *Engliſh* have likewiſe another Benefit, of having the Tranſlations of all the Moderns of any Value, of all other Nations

wher

here polite Learning has flouriſh'd. Then I believe may ſay, that our Countrymen have ſhewn Wit nd Genius equal to the greateſt of *Greece* and *Rome*. hoſe indeed were the firſt Nurſeries of Art and Wit. or my Part, I am not convinc'd of that Divinity of hoſe old Heroes in Poetry; and I think that he who dolizes them to that Degree, muſt be blinded by the louds of Incenſe that are offered to them by the af-ected Bigotry of After-Ages. They certainly were Men of great Genius, and perform'd Wonders for the imes they writ in; but I think, if they had done eſs, they would not have wanted Admiration in our Days. Yet I cannot bear it, that becauſe they were ook'd on as the chief in their own Time, they hould be thought ſo of all the Ages to come. If a Contempt of, and Irreverence to the Ancients, be hought injurious to their Merit, it cannot with Ju-tice be thought juſt to diſcover a Neglect and Con-empt of the Moderns; for that muſt make Men of dmirable Parts chuſe rather to be ſtill and idle, and ury their Talents in Obſcurity, than venture to come nto the Light, where they are ſure to have their Performances meet with open Injuſtice. This was he Caſe of the Authors in the Time of *Auguſtus*, of which *Horace* complains, when his Contemporaries were for condemning every thing, not becauſe ill perform'd, but becauſe it was Modern.

What you have urg'd (ſaid I) Sir, ſeems to me out of the Queſtion at this Time. We are not for exclu-ding the Moderns from their Merits, but inſiſt, that no *Modern* has any Merit but what he owes to the Rules and Precedents of the *Ancients*: We are aſſer-ting the Neceſſity and Uſe of the Rules of Art eſta-bliſhed by the Ancients; and till you have confuted them, what has been ſaid remains in full Force.

If you have any modern *Critic* who has gone on a different Foot from the *Ancients*, you ſhould pro-duce him; and not only ſo, but juſtify thoſe Parts in which he diſſents from *Ariſtotle* or his beſt Com-

mentators. We have had ſome Attempts made at *Criticiſm* in the *Spectators*, *Guardians*, &c. but they have proceeded no farther than Words, and the ſubſervient Parts to Poetry, but never durſt advance to the Diſpoſition of the Parts, and an Œconomy of an entire Poem, except in the excellent Examination of *Milton*, which is every where directed by the Rules of *Ariſtotle*, and the receiv'd *Critics*.

As it is the laſt Perfection in Painting, rightly to order and diſpoſe of things, ſo it is in Poetry. This Order and Diſpoſition muſt be obſerv'd as well in a Picture of one Figure, as in one of many. The Nature of Man, ſays *Xenophon*, can name nothing ſo fair and uſeful as Order; a confus'd Piece of Work can never deſerve Admiration. Thoſe things only affect us, in which every Part is not only perfect in it ſelf, but alſo well diſpoſed by a natural Connection. Nature it ſelf ſeems to be upheld by Order, and ſo are all things elſe which are ſubject to the ſame Cauſe. The Sun, Moon, and Stars have gone their eternal Rounds by Rule, and in Order; and yet certainly they muſt be allow'd to be beautiful, and more charming than they could have been without it.

I confeſs (reply'd *Tyro*) I have not yet thought enough of this Matter to eſtabliſh our Rules. But I can't perſwade my ſelf but that is a Work to be effected by Pains and Leiſure.

Since then, Sir, (ſaid I) you are not furniſh'd with a new Syſtem, give me Leave to urge from the admirable *Dacier* his Reaſons why that of *Ariſtotle* is to be admitted; and if you have any Objections to make upon hearing that, I do not doubt but I ſhall be able to give you a ſatisfactory Anſwer.

As the Injuſtice of Men gave Occaſion for the making of Laws; ſo the Decay of Arts, and the Faults committed in them, brought in a Neceſſity of making of Rules, and of reviving them. But to prevent the Objections of ſome who diſdain to be confin'd to any Rules, but thoſe of their own Fancy, it ſeems to me very

ery neceſſary to prove, not only, that Poetry is an rt, but that this Art is known, and its Rules be cer inly thoſe of *Ariſtotle*, that it is impoſſible to ſuc eed in this Art by any other Ways. Having prov'd his Point, I ſhall examine the two Conſequences hich naturally follow. Firſt, that the Rules, and hat pleaſes, are never contrary to one another, and hat you can never obtain the latter, that is, you can ever pleaſe, without the former, that is the Rules. econdly, that Poeſy being an Art can never be preju icial to Mankind; and that it was invented and mprov'd only for their Advantage.

This Method obliges me to trace Poetry from its riginal, to ſhew, that it was the Daughter of Reli ion; that, in Proceſs of time, it was debauch'd nd vitiated; and laſtly, that it was brought under he Rules of Art, which aſſiſted in the Correcting he Failures of Nature.

God, touch'd with Compaſſion for the Miſery of len, who were oblig d to toil and labour for their ubſiſtance, inſtituted Days of Feſtival to give them eſt and Ceſſation from their Work; ordaining the ffering Sacrifices to himſelf, as a juſt Thankſgi ing for the Bleſſings receiv'd from his Bounty. This a Truth which was, and is acknowledg'd by the eathens themſelves. For they not only imitated heſe Days of Feſtival and Reſt, but always ſpoke of hem as a Gift of the immortal Gods, who having ranted a Time of Repoſe, requir'd ſome Teſtimony f their Gratitude for the Benefit.

The firſt *Feſtivals* of the *Antients* were in this Man ner; they aſſembled at certain Times, eſpecially in the *Autumn*, after the gathering in of the Fruits of the Earth, to rejoice, and offer the moſt valuable, and choice of them to God. And this was it, that firſt gave Birth to *Poetry*. For Men who are naturally en han'd to the Imitation and *Muſic*, employ'd their Ta ents to ſing the Praiſes of that particular God whom they

they worshipp'd, and to celebrate his most conspicuous, and remarkable *Actions*.

If they had always kept to that primitive Simplicity, all the *Poetry* we shou'd have had, wou'd have only been Hymns and Songs of Thanksgiving and Praise, as we find among the *Israelites* and *Jews* in the Old Testament: But it was very difficult, or rather impossible, that Wisdom and Purity should reign long in the Assemblies of the *Heathens*. They soon mingled the Praises of Men, with those of their Gods; and at last came to the filling of their Poems with biting *Satires*, which they sung to one another at their drunken Meetings. Thus *Poetry* was entirely corrupted, the present carrying very few Marks of Religion, even in our Age of *Christianity*.

The *Poets*, that follow'd, and who (properly speaking) were the *Philosophers*, and *Divines* of those early Times, observing the general and earnest Bent of the People for those *Festivals*, and *Shows*, and the Impossibility of recovering the first *Simplicity*, pursu'd another Way of giving a Remedy to this Disorder; and making an Advantage of the Peoples Inclinations, gave them Instructions disguis'd under the Charms of *Pleasure*, as Physicians gild or sweeten the Pills they administer to their Patients.

I will not here pretend to observe and give a History of all the Changes, that have happen'd in *Poetry*, or shew by what Degrees it is arriv'd to that Perfection, in which we now find it.

Homer was the first that either invented or render'd compleat the *Epic* or *Heroic Poem*; for he certainly found out the Unity of the *Subject*, the *Manners*, the *Characters*, and the *Fable*. But this Poem cou'd only affect Customs; and was not moving enough to correct the *Passions*. There was *wanting* a Poem, which by imitating our *Actions*, might work on our Spirits a more ready and sensible Effect: This gave Rise to *Tragedy*, and banish'd all *Satyrs*, by which Means *Poetry* was entirely purg'd from all the Disorders into which its Corruption had brought it.

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This is no Place to ſhew, that Men, who are quickly weary of regulated Pleaſures, labour'd, and took Pains to plunge themſelves again into their former Licenciouſneſs by the Invention of *Comedy*. I ſhall keep my ſelf to *Tragedy*, which is the moſt noble *Imitation*; in which all the Parts of an *Heroic Poem* are comprizd.

How ſhort ſoever this Account may be, it is yet ſufficient to let you ſee that *Poetry* is an Art; for ſince it has a certain *End*, there muſt be ſome certain Way of arriving at that *End*. No Body can doubt of ſo evident a Truth, that in all Things, where there may be a *Right*, and a *Wrong*, there is an *Art*, and ſure Rules to lead you to the former, and direct you how to avoid the latter.

The Queſtion therefore now is, Whether theſe Rules are known, and whether they are thoſe which are given us by *Ariſtotle*? This Queſtion is no leſs doubtful than the former; I muſt alſo confeſs, that this cannot be determin'd, but by the *Unlearned*, who, becauſe they are the greater Number, I ſhall make my Examination in their Favour. To do this with ſome Sort of Method, there are ſome Things to be conſider'd, *(1.) Who gives the Rules? (2.) The Time when he gives them: (3.) The Manner, in which he gives them. (4.) And the Effects they have wrought in different Times in different People.* For I believe, from theſe four Circumſtances, I can draw ſuch Concluſions, as the moſt obſtinate ſhall not be able to deny.

He, who gives theſe Rules, is one of the greateſt *Philoſophers*, that ever was in the World; his Genius was large, and of a vaſt Extent; the great Diſcoveries he made in all Sciences, particularly in the Knowledge of Man, are certain Signs, that he had ſufficient Inſight into our Paſſions, to diſcover the *Rules* of the *Art of Poetry*, which is founded on them. But I ſhall ſuſpend my Judgment, and paſs on *to the Time in which* he gave theſe *Rules*.

I find

I find, that he was born in the Age, in which *Tragedy* first appear'd, or at least made its first Advances towards Perfection. For he liv'd with the Disciples of *Æschylus*, who brought it out of *Confusion*, and he had the same Masters, that *Sophocles* and *Euripides* had, who carry'd it to its utmost Perfection. Besides, he was Witness of the Opinion, that the most nice, and knowing People of the World had of this Poem. 'Tis therefore impossible, that *Aristotle* shou'd be ignorant of the *Origin*, *Progress*, *Design*, and Effects of this *Art*; and consequently even before I examine these *Rules*, I am perfectly assur'd, on his Account, who gives them, that they have all the Certainty and Authority, that Rules can possibly have.

But when I came to examine the Manner in which *Aristotle* delivers them, I find them so evident, and so conformable to Nature, that I cannot but be sensible, they are true. For *Aristotle* gives not his *Rules* as *Legislators* do their Laws, without any other *Reason* than his Will; all that he advances is confirm'd by Reasons drawn from the common Sentiments of Mankind, so that Men themselves become the *Rule* and Measure of what he lays down. Thus, without considering, that the *Rules* are of almost equal Date with the *Art*, they teach, or any Prepossession in favour of *Aristotle*'s Name; (for 'tis the Work that ought to make the *Name* valuable, and not the Name the Work) I find my self oblig'd to submit to all his Decisions, the Truth of which I am convinc'd of in my self, and whose Certainty I discover by Reason, and Experience, which never yet deceiv'd any Body.

To this I shall add, *The Effects which these Rules have produc'd in all Ages, on different Sorts of People*; and I find, that as they made the Beauty of the Poems of *Homer*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides* in *Greece*, from which they were drawn, so four or five Hundred Years after, they adorn'd the Poems of *Virgil*, and other famous *Latin Poets*; and that now after two Thousand Years, they make the best *Tragedies*, we have, in which all

that

t pleaſes *only* does ſo as it is conformable to theſe
les (and that too without one's being aware of it)
l what is diſpleaſing is ſuch, becauſe it is contrary
them: For *good Senſe*, and *right Reaſon*, is of all
untries and Places; the ſame Subjects, which
s'd ſo many Tears to be ſhed in the *Roman Theatre*,
oduce the ſame Effect on ours; and thoſe Things,
t then gave Diſtaſte do the ſame now. From
ence I am convinc'd, that never any Laws had
h Force and Authority. Humane Laws expire, or
ange very often after the Death of thoſe, who
acted them, becauſe Circumſtances change, and the
tereſts of whom they are made to ſerve are diffe-
nt; but theſe ſtill gain new Vigour, becauſe they
e the Laws of Nature, which always acts with
niformity, renews them inceſſantly, and gives them
perpetuate Exiſtence.

I won't pretend, however, that the *Rules* of this
rt are ſo firmly eſtabliſh'd, that it is impoſſible to
d any thing to them; for tho' *Tragedy* has all its
oper Parts, it is poſſible, that one of them may yet
rive at a greater Perfection. I am perſuaded, that
o' we have been able to add nothing to the *Subject*,
Means, yet we have added ſomething to the Man-
r. But all the new Diſcoveries are ſo far from de-
roying this Eſtabliſhment, that they do nothing
ore than confirm it. For Nature is never contrary
it ſelf; and we may apply to the *Art* of *Poetry*,
hat *Hypocrates* ſays of *Phyſic*. --- Phiſic (ſays he) *is*
long ſtanding, has ſure Principle, and a certain Way,
which in the Courſe of many Ages, an Infinity of Things
ve been diſcover'd, of which Experience confirms the Good-
ſs. All that is wanting for the Perfection of this Art,
ill, without doubt, be found out, by thoſe ingenious Men,
o will ſearch for it, according to the Inſtructions and
ules of the Antients, *and endeavour to arrive at what*
unknown, by what is already plain and evident. For
hoever ſhall boaſt, that he has obtain'd this Art by re-
cting the Ways of the Antients, *and purſuing a quite*
dif-

different Track, deceives others, and is himself deceiv'd because that is absolutely impossible.

This Truth extends it self to all Arts and Science nor is it any difficult Matter to find a proper Exam in our Subject. There is no Want of *Tragedies*, whi the Management is directly opposite to that of t *Antients.* According to the Rules of *Aristotle*, a *Tr gedy* is the Imitation of an Allegorical, and Unive sal Action, which by the Means of *Terror* and *Comp ſion*, moderates and corrects our Inclinations: But a cording to these new *Tragedies*, it is an Imitation some *particular Action* (as in *England* of many Ac ons) which affects no Body, and is only invented amuse the Spectators by the *Plot* or unravelling of vain Intrigue, tho' this is far beyond our *Engl* Authors, who have not even that to pretend t which tends only to excite and satisfie our Curiosi and stir up our Passions, instead of rendering the calm, and quiet. This is not only not the *same Art*, b can be none at all, since it tends to no Good, and is pure Lye without any Mixture of Truth. What A vantage can be drawn from this Falshood? in shor it is not a *Fable*, and by Consequence is not at all *Tragedy*, for a *Tragedy* cannot subsist without a *Fab*

We come now to the first Consequence, which w draw from what we have established, and shall en deavour to prove, that our *Laws*, and *what pleas* can never be opposite, since the *Rules* were only ma for that which does please, and are directed only t shew you, and point out the Way that you must wal in to do so. By this we shall destroy that false Maxim *That all that pleases is good*, wou'd assert what we ough on the contrary to say that --- *All that is good, pleas or ought to please.* For the Goodness of any Work whatever does not proceed from this, that it gives Pleasure; but the Pleasure, that we have, proceed from its Goodness, unless our deluded Eyes, and cor rupt Imaginations, mislead us.

f the *Rules*, and *that which pleaſes*, were Things op-
ite, a Poet cou'd never arrive at giving Pleaſure
by meer Chance, which is abſurd. There muſt
that Reaſon be a certain Way that leads thither,
l that Way is the *Rule*, which we ought to learn.
this *Rule* being drawn from the *Pleaſant* and the
fitable, leads us to their very Source. The *Pleaſant*
l the *Profitable*, is that which pleaſes naturally;
s it is that in all *Arts* we conſult, and is the moſt
e and perfect Model that we can imitate. In it we
l perfect *Unity* and *Order*; for it ſelf is *Order*, or to
ak more properly the Effect of *Order*, and the *Rules*
ich conducts us thither. There is but one Way to
l *Order*, but a great many to fall into Confuſion.
There wou'd be nothing bad in the World if all
t *pleas'd* were *good*; for there is nothing ſo ridicu-
s, but what will have its Admirers. You may ſay
deed, that it is no truer, that what is *good pleaſes*,
auſe we every Day find Diſputes of the *Good*, and
Pleaſant; that the ſame thing pleaſes ſome, and
pleaſes others; nay, it pleaſes and diſpleaſes the
y ſame Perſon at different Times. From whence
n proceeds this Difference? It comes either from
abſolute Ignorance of the *Rules*, or that the Paſſi-
s alter it. Rightly to clear this Truth, I believe,
ay lay down this Maxim, that all ſenſible Objects
of two Sorts; ſome may be judg'd of by Senſe in-
pendently of Reaſon; (I call Senſe, that Impreſſions
ich the Animal Spirits make on the Soul) others
n't be judg'd of but by Reaſon exercis'd in Science.
ings ſimply agreeable, or diſagreeable, are of the
ſt Sort: All the World may judge alike of theſe.
Example, the moſt ignorant in *Muſic* obſerves
y well when a *Luniſt* ſtrikes one String for ano-
r, eſpecially if they ſtrike out of Tune, becauſe he
lges by his Senſe, and that Senſe is his *Rule*. On
h Occaſions we may truly ſay, that what *pleaſes* is
d, becauſe that which is *good* does pleaſe, or that
ich is *bad* never fails to diſpleaſe. For neither

Paſ-

Paſſions nor *Ignorance* dull the Senſes; nay, on the contrary, they ſharpen them. But it is not the ſame Things that ſpring from Reaſon. Paſſion and Ignorance act very ſtrongly on this, and very often cheat it; and this is the Cauſe why we judge ſo indifferently of theſe Things, of which Reaſon is the *Rule* and *Cauſe*. Why what is *Bad* often *pleaſes*, and that which is *Good* does not always do ſo, is not the fault of the Object, but of him who judges. But what is *Good* will infallibly *pleaſe* thoſe who can judge, and that ſufficient. By this we may ſee, that a Play, which ſhall bring thoſe Things, which are to be judg'd of by Reaſon within the *Rules*, as alſo what is to be judg'd of by the Senſe, ſhall never fail to *pleaſe*, for that will pleaſe both the *Learned*, and the *Ignorant*. Now the Conformity of Suffrages is the moſt ſure, and according to *Ariſtotle*, the only Mark of the *Good*, and the *Pleaſant*. Now theſe Suffrages are not obtain'd but by the Obſervation of the *Rules*; and conſequently the *Rules* are the only Cauſe of the *Good*, and the *Pleaſant*, whether they are follow'd methodically, or by Deſign, or by Accident only. For it is certain, that there are many Perſons, who are entirely ignorant of theſe *Rules*, who do not however fail of Succeſs in ſome Particular. But this is far from deſtroying the *Rules*, ſince it ſerves only to ſhew their Beauty, and proves how far they are conformable to *Nature*, ſince thoſe often follow them who know nothing of them, as our *Shakeſpear*.

It is Time to come to the laſt Conſequence, that *Poetry* is an *Art* invented for the Inſtruction of Mankind, and conſequently muſt be *profitable*. 'Tis a general Truth, that every *Art* is a good Thing, becauſe there is none whoſe End is not *good*. But as it is no leſs true, that Men often abuſe the beſt Things, that which was deſign'd for a wholſome Remedy, may in Time become a very dangerous Poiſon. I ſpeak not therefore (ſays *Dacier*) of corrupted *Tragedy*; for it is not in deprav'd Writers, that we muſt look for

Reaſon

ſon, and the Intent of *Nature*, but in thoſe, who *ſound* and *perfect*. I ſpeak of the Ancient *Tragedy*, t which is conformable to *Ariſtote*'s *Rules*, and I e ſay, that it is the moſt profitable and neceſſary ll Diverſions.

f 'twas poſſible to oblige Men to follow the Precepts the *Goſpel*, nothing cou'd be more deſir'd or hap- in that they wou'd find true Peace and ſolid Plea- e, and a Remedy for all their Infirmities, and u'd look on *Tragedy* as uſeleſs and below them. t as ſo much Corruption is inconſiſtent with ſo ch Wiſdom, the ancient Heathen Philoſophers were c'd to ſeek a Remedy to the Diſorders of the Plea- es of Mankind. To this End they invented *Trage-* as a Means which was able to correct the Vices o which they plung'd themſelves at their Feſtivals, d to render thoſe Amuſements *profitable*, which ſtom, and their Infirmities, had made neceſſary, d their Corruption very dangerous.

Men are the ſame now that they were then; they ve the ſame Paſſions, and run with the ſame Ear- ſtneſs after Pleaſures. To endeavour to reclaim em from that State by the Severity of *Precepts*, is more than the attempting to put a Bridle on an uly Horſe in the midſt of his Carreer. In the an while there is no Medium, they run into the oſt criminal Exceſs, unleſs you afford them regular d ſober Pleaſures. 'Tis a great Happineſs, that eir remaining Reaſon enclines them to love Diver- ns, where there is *Order*, and Spectacles where *uth* is to be found. Thoſe People are diſtemper'd, d *Tragedy* is all the Remedy they are capable of re- iving any Advantage from; for it is the only Re- eation in which we can find the Agreeable and the ofitable.

But this is not in the common Scribbles of the mes, but in a perfect and general Fable, which on- can give a general Inſtruction, and to form this ble, and make it perfect in all its Parts; to attain

this

'his admirable End, Order, Harmony and Design
be fixt, and thoſe are only to be found in the R
laid down by *Ariſtotle*. The Excellence, of whi
think I have made ſufficiently evident from *Dacier*.

If, Sir, you have now any thing to object ag
what I have deliver'd, I ſhould be glad to hear it.

I confeſs (ſaid *Tyro*) I cannot deny the Reaſons
have urg'd from Mr. *Dacier*, and I believe, that
Ariſtotle were a little more ſtudy'd by our *Tragedy*
ters, we ſhou'd have their Works of a longer
than they now generally enjoy. But as *Tragedy* is
the only Sort of *Poetry* that has appear'd in
World, ſo I can't find but we ſhou'd be at a Loſ
deciding the Standard in ſeveral other Sorts of *Poe*

As for that (anſwer'd *Laudon*) we have *Rea*
and *Nature*, and the *Practice* of the *Antients* in all
valuable Parts of it. And as all *Poetry* is *Imitati*
Ariſtotle will be no little Help to us in thoſe ve
Parts, which he has not profeſſedly touch'd upo
It is ſufficient, I think to the Point, that we h
been arguing upon, that it is evident, that as the
is a *Right*, and a *Wrong*, in all *Poetical* Performanc
ſo there muſt be a certain Way of knowing which
the *Right*, and which the *Wrong*, elſe all muſt be
fuſion; and every Man being left Judge of theſe Q
lities, there wou'd be no ſuch thing at laſt, if the
were not *ſtated Rules* of them; and I think it is
plain, that theſe *ſtated* Rules are to be found in *Ariſ*
tle, *Horace*, and their beſt Commentators. And
ſome new Diſcoverer ſhall ariſe, who ſhall ſhew
from a *farther Penetration* into Nature, that our p
ſent Guides have miſtaken her, we ought to be
rected by them.

For my Part (ſaid *Manilia*) I have but few Objecti
ons to make to what has been ſaid, and as they co
from a Woman uninform'd by Learning, I hope th
will meet a favourable Hearing. The firſt is in
Behalf of *Opera's*, that is in the Juſtification of *Mu*
All that can be ſaid can never perſuade our Ears,
Eyes, not to be pleas'd with that which pleaſes the
A

l next, though I ſhou'd own that it ſeems neceſſa-
that there ſhould be *ſtated Rules* of *Right* and
ng in *Poetry*, as well as in all Things elſe; yet
ilſt you Men wrap up that Knowledge in ſuch
ficult and obſcure Terms, that we *Women* cannot eaſi-
nderſtand them; you labour at a Point which can
er be obtain'd, for that wou'd exclude our Sex from
Prerogative we have of deciding on the *publick*
erſions, which we ſhall never willingly part with.
s for your firſt Objection (ſaid *Laudon*) we do not
eavour to diſſuade your Ears and Eyes, not to be
as'd with what diverts them. All that we aim
is to perſuade you not to be meer Senſualiſts, and
more Deference to the Gratification of thoſe two
ſes, than to that of your *Reaſon*, and *Underſtanding*;
, not to ſacrifice your *Reaſon* and your *Underſtand-*
to the Gratification of thoſe two Senſes. We
u'd not pretend to exclude the noble Entertainment
Muſic, we wou'd only have it reduc'd to its primi-
e Inſtitution to be ſubſervient to *Poetry*, and not to
erwhelm it. We wou'd have it the *Servant*, and
the *Maſter*, as it originally was.

As for the latter, tho' my Friend *Gamaliel* deſigns a
ce for the Publick to render *Criticiſm* eaſy and fa-
liar to the Ladies, yet if he, and this Company,
nk fit to humour me with two or three Meetings.
o not queſtion but we may run through all the
ts of *Poetry* in ſuch a Manner as may give a *Lady*,
your good Senſe, a perfect View of the *Art* of
try in all its Parts.

Tyro and *Manilia* ſeem'd mightily pleas'd with the
ppoſal, and agreed to meet two Days after in order
begin the Diſquiſition. But Mrs. *Lamode*, *Iſſachar*,
d *Tom Triſle*, made a Jeſt of it, and after Ceremo-
s paſt, took their Leave.

And this *Crites* was the Subſtance of our ſecond Con-
ſation, in which if I have done Juſtice to the Per-
s who made up the Diſcourſe, and come up to your
tions of the Matter, I am ſatisfy'd that I am not
from the Truth.

The End of the Second Dialogue.

THE *Complete* ART OF POETRY

DIALOGUE III.

Of the Manner, Rules, and Art of Compos Epigrams, Paſtorals, Odes, *&c.*

THUS far, *Crites*, I have given you an Acco of our Converſation at the ingenious *Laud* which reach'd no farther than the Preli naries of the *Art of Poetry*, I now come to the P cepts of the Art it ſelf, in which you muſt not ex the fine Turns of *Fontinelle*, whoſe Subject was ſimp and allow'd Room for Embelliſhments, which preſent Subject, conſiſting of ſuch Variety, can admit, without ſwelling the Volume into a B not ſo agreeable to the Buyers as I deſire this ſho be. I think it ſufficient to the End and Aim of Undertaking, if, from what paſs'd, I give only telligible and plain Rules obvious to the Capacity every Reader of Common Senſe.

According to Agreement, *Tyro* and *Manilia* met Order to purſue our Diſcourſe. For having fou that Criticiſm was abſolutely neceſſary to diſtingu between what was good and what was bad, it na rally gave them a Deſire of knowing the Rules each Part of them, that they might form their Ju ment by them.

As ſoon as we were ſeated and left to our ſelves, Alas! ſaid *Manilia*) I deſpair of ever attaining the of *Criticiſm*; the Taſk is too difficult, and ſo many alifications are requir'd, that I fear it is impoſſible t I ſhou'd ever make any tolerable Benefit of all Enquiries and Application that Way.

Whence ariſe theſe Difficulties (ſaid *Laudon*) which m to cool that Ardour with which you appear'd to ſo fir'd, to diſtinguiſh your ſelf from the vulgar ders and Hearers when we were laſt together.

Laſt Night (reply'd *Manilia*) I happen'd to caſt my s on a certain celebrated Author, who abſolutely ires a Skill in the learned Languages, and a Famiity with the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, to the forng a juſt *Critic*. *Logic* and ſeveral other difficult Scies he alſo makes neceſſary to the ſame End; Aemplifhments which we Women can rarely arrive at. Be not diſcourag'd, fair *Manilia* (aſſum'd *Laudon*) by ſe Bugbears conjur'd up by the Spirit of Pedantry, and Affectation of ſome Men of Learning, who would groſs the Knowledge of things to themſelves, as a Rempence of their Pains and Time ſpent in attaining *Words*; Good Senſe and Nature is of all Languages, true *Criticiſm* is only good Senſe and Nature with ſon, let the Pedants preach what they pleaſe.

I formerly told you of a Sort of Criticks who re the *Piece-Brokers of* Parnaſſus, and I am ſorry, t I muſt ſay, that this Gentleman (for I know the thor by what you have ſaid) diſcovers himſelf be one of this Fraternity; for indeed the whole ſtance and Aim of his Diſcourſe on this Head, is t if you read the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets without derſtanding (I will add) without a Maſtery in the ek and *Latin* Languages, you will not be able to ſcover the Beauties and Graces of the Diction of ſe admirable Poets. For this reaches no farther n the Diction, the bare Expreſſion, which I have merly ſhew'd you was drawn from Grammar and etorick, and only admitted into Poetry, as a Vehicle

hicle for the more pleasing Conveyance of the
valuable and truly poetical Qualities of Inven
Disposition, Fable, Characters, Passions, &c. H
ver, I shall observe, that this Author differs
much in his Notion of a Critic with some of his
ternity, with whom he has not disdain'd to
himself, tho' much above their Level; for he m
a Critic a very considerable Person, and require
many Accomplishments in him, as are generally
ven to *Homer* and *Virgil*; whereas, the others (I m
the merry Laughers at all things serious and so
make a very despicable Animal of him, and turn
Name of Critic into Ridicule, as an Impertinence
to be endur'd in a polite Conversation.

For my Part, I think them in an Error on b
Sides. For first, I do not see, that all this Depth
Learning, the Knowledge of all the Sciences, a
the like, are absolutely necessary to the forming
a very good Critic, that is a Judge in Poetry, in a
one, or in all its Parts: Good Sense, a Knowledge
the Rules, and a Taste or Gusto in Art and Natu
and a Conversation with the best Authors he can
derstand, are Qualifications sufficient to make a go
Judge of him who understands not one Word of *L*
or *Greek*, of *Homer* or *Virgil*, in their own origi
Dress. For the Diction only depends upon
Knowledge of the Tongues, a Part (as I have of
observ'd) only of *Grammar* and *Rhetoric*, and not P
try; and for that Reason, *Aristotle* only transien
touching on it, refers you to those for your Acco
plishment in it.

I would not be misunderstood here, in what I
against the Pedants, as if I would extend my Cen
to the Condemnation of the *Greek* and *Latin* Langua
or the Study of them. There is no doubt, but that t
are excellent and perfect, and that the Study of th
is of great Use, if pursu'd by those who know, that L
guage is only the Shell of Learning, and not Learnin
self. And for *Greek* and *Latin*, 'tis confess'd, that we

ebted to them for all our Politeneſs, for all our
s and *Sciences*; but then I muſt ſay that we owe
ewiſe a very great Evil to them, and that is PEDAN-
Y, which has brought ſo great and juſt (if I may ſay)
a Scandal on Letters: And this will be diſcover'd
ough all the Diſguiſe of a ſmooth Stile, and Gentle-
n like Air, more or leſs according to the degree of
ection, with which the Perſon labours. I am ſorry
iſcover ſo much of this Diſtemper in this Author, for
re ſeems a Pride of Knowledge in theſe Languages,
ich exalts him above any one who does not under-
d them; whereas it very often happens, that the moſt
owing in the dead, are the leaſt ſo in the living
ngues, which they were born to ſpeak, an Error highly
juſtly condemn'd by Mr. LOCKE, in his Diſcourſe on
ucation. Though Mr. MATTAIRE, a Pupil of Doc-
BUSBY's, has carried this Notion of the Study of
dead Languages farther than I know of; for he,
iting what he calls an *Engliſh Grammar* (by which in-
d he plainly diſcovers that he does not underſtand
gliſh at all) will have it in his Preface, that to know
r own Language we muſt be Maſters of *Greek*, becauſe
Technical Words or Terms of Art are deriv'd from
Greek; but by Parity of Reaſon he might as well
e urg'd the neceſſity of our underſtanding all the
ngues of *Europe* as well living as dead, ſince much
our Tongue is deriv'd from them all. From this
e Opinion is ſprung another as injurious to Learning;
that is the giving the Name of a *Scholar* chiefly, if
only, to thoſe, who are *Grecians* or *Latiniſts*;
ereas I have known a Cheeſemonger, one Mr. *Pot-*
by Name, who, without one Word of *Greek* or *La-*
was infinitely a greater Scholar than many of theſe
brated Linguiſts; for this Mr. *Potter* was a Maſter of
the Circle of the Arts and Sciences, and could diſ-
rſe more rationally on them than many of our Uni-
ſity Men, who contemn'd his Ignorance of all
ngues but his own.

But to answer all these Difficulties by an Exam
against which there will be no Exception, let us l
over the Examen or Criticism of the brightest Per
concern'd in the TATLERS and SPECTATORS,
his Observations on MILTON'S PARADISE Los
and see if there be any need of *Greek* or *Latin*, or
understanding of so many Arts and Sciences, to appreh
what he says on this Subject. No, it is all plain and e
to an *English* Reader; he had else miss'd his Aim,
Praise of that exalted Author, which he has made
with a great deal of Clearness and Ease.

Passing therefore all this Clamour over as mere C
mour indeed, and Affectation of being thought singul
and above the Censure of all but the *Linguists*, I sh
proceed to another Error of this Author you have m
tion'd; and that is, that he excludes all finding fa
from the Duty of a *Critic*; though it be as plain as a
thing can be, that ARISTOTLE in his *Art of Poe*
has not one Chapter in which he does not expose and c
demn some Fault of one Poet or other. But then he s
the Beauties were likewise shewn, and had their d
Praise; I grant it, but that was because the Poem
consider'd had their Beauties. If any *Critic* in our A
should fall on a celebrated Poem, and expose the Fau
in it, without pointing out the Beauties, he may well
excused; since in many of them there is not to be fou
so much as one beautiful Line; as I cou'd easily prov
were this a Place and Time.

I shall join with him in declaring against those fa
Critics, who are fond of finding, and exposing Peccad
lo's, and of turning any valuable Thing into Ridicu
I am as much against that unfair Mirth as he, and allo
that the Critics of Reputation of all Countries, ha
treated the Authors, who fall under their Considerati
in another Manner. And yet I must needs say, that
a Man were to write on some Mens Performances,
wou'd be a hard Matter to avoid being Merry at th
taking Absurdities. Nay the REHEARSAL, I believ

ill always be allow'd a very good Criticism, and yet it compos'd wholly of Mirth and Ridicule. I know of one Critic besides in our Tongue who has attempt- it, and that is Mr. RIMER, who, notwithstanding hat this Gentleman says and the rest of his Fraternity, ill always be allow'd to have been a Man of general earning, and that his Criticisms are generally, if not holly, just. And this is confess'd by Mr. DRYDEN mself, who was not the most indulgent Person in the orld to Men of that Character.

I shall only add one Remark more, that by this Gen- eman's instancing *Passages*, *Words*, and the like, he ems to refer all *Criticism* to the *Diction*, without re- rd to the more important Parts of Poetry. So that hen he talks of *Critics* finding out *Beauties* in the Au- ors they consider, he means only Commentators, akers of Notes, Explainers of Expressions, of which e have said sufficient already, but may perhaps *en pas- nt* add something more hereafter. Such was SCALIGER n HOMER, and most of those *Critics*, against whom RISTOTLE defends HOMER's Words and Expres- ons.

Having thus, Madam, I hope answer'd your Quota- on from the *Spectator* in all its Points, and shewn you, at you may be a very good Judge of an *English* Poem any Kind, without the knowledge of *Greek* and *Latin*, being conversant with the Authors in those Languages, hether Poetical or Critical; let us proceed, by laying own our Rules of Judgment in all these Cases, to make is plain beyond a Contradiction.

You have indeed (said MANILIA) appeas'd my Ap- ehensions, and I begin now again to hope that a *Wo- an* may be able to judge for herself, in Matters of Po- ry, and not pin her Faith on the Dictates of the Men, ho would impose upon us by their hard Words, which e do not understand. I confess, I cou'd wish we had little more liberty in our Opinions in Religious Mat- rs, than entirely to depend on the Decision of the

Prieſt; but to be under the ſame Hardſhips in Po is a Greivance not to be borne.

I beg you therefore, begin to enlarge my Und ſtanding by coming to what we met about, t is, the ſeveral Rules of Excellence in every K of Poetry.

I ſhall willingly comply with your Deſires, (ſ LAUDON) but ſince the Task is ſomething long muſt beg to be relieved ſometimes by my Fri GAMALIEL. And ſince we will begin from t loweſt Range of Verſes, which lays claim to t Name of Poetry, I will lay the Burthen on hi whilſt I diſpatch a little Buſineſs, which has une pectedly ſummon'd my Attendance: But before has gone through the *Epigram*, the *Paſtorals*, a ſome others, I will be with you again.

LAUDON on this withdrew, and I began in t Manner.

Of all the Works in Verſe which the Antie have left us, the *Epigram* is of much the leaſt C ſideration; yet is it not without its proper Beaut and Defects. Its Beauty, either in a delicate Tu or in a lucky Word. The *Grecians* ſeem to ha had another Idea of this Sort of Poem, than wh the *Latins* had. The *Greek Epigram* runs upon Turn of Thought, that is natural, but fine and ſu tle. The *Latin Epigram*, by a falſe Taſte, that pr vail'd in the firſt Decay of the pure *Latinity* or *man* Language, endeavours to ſurprize the Mind ſome nipping Word, which is call'd a Point. *Catullus*, who liv'd juſt before the Alteration of t Commonwealth into a Monarchy by *Auguſtus*, fo low'd the Manner of the *Greeks*, which is much a finer Character; for he endeavours to encloſe a n tural Thought, in a delicate Turn of Words, and the ſimplicity of a ſoft Expreſſion. *Martial*, wh liv'd in the Time of *Domitian*, was in a manner t

Autho

uthor of the other Way, of terminating of an or-
nary Thought by ſome Word that is ſurprizing.
t Men of a delicate Taſte have always prefer'd
e Manner of CATULLUS to that of MARTIAL.
NDREAS NANGERIUS, a Noble *Venetian* of a
e Guſto, ſacrificed yearly a MARTIAL to the
anes of CATULLUS. "I can ſay nothing (ſays
Rapin) conſiderable on the Epigrammatiſts of la-
ter Ages. It is one of the Sorts of Verſe in
which a Man has little Succeſs; for 'tis a meer
lucky Hit, if it proves well. An *Epigram* is little
worth unleſs it be admirable; and it is ſo rare (con-
cludes he) to make them admirable, that it is ſuf-
ficient to have made one in a Man's Life.
Notwithſtanding the Contempt with which the
ſt Judges have ſtigmatiz'd *Epigram*, yet it has
nd its Admirers; VAVASOR a *Jeſuit* has writ-
a large Book of the Art of Compoſing it, and
the Praiſe which he thinks its due. For my Part,
ough I have no manner of Reliſh of it, I am yet
retaining it as a ſeparate Body; that the Lovers
pert Turns, quaint Thoughts, and Point may
ve ſome way of venting themſelves, ſo as not to
rupt the other Parts of Poetry with it, to the pre-
lice of Nature, and all Poetic Excellence. *Pe-
rch* began this abominable Manner, and has been
low'd by Writers of moſt Nations, but moſt by
Engliſh. For as we deriv'd the Poliſhing our
rſification from *Italy*, ſo we deriv'd too great
ils from the ſame Country, which have almoſt
il'd ſome of our moſt celebrated Authors. I
an the Romantic Vein of *Arioſto*, which corrupt-
SPENSER; and this Itch of Points in all man-
of Subjects, and in all Sorts of Verſe, by which
TRARCH has debauch'd COWLEY, SUCK-
NG, and too much of *Waller* himſelf.

But I digreſs: To return therefore to the *Epigram*, it will not be ungrateful perhaps to give you a Summary Account of its Riſe.

The *Epigram* had both its Riſe and its Name from *Inſcriptions* that were us'd to be either engrav'd or hung on *Pillars*, on *Walls*, *Buildings*, *Statues*, *Trophies*, *Shields*, *Ships*, and the like. And this at firſt was the general Meaning of the Word *Epigram*, which was afterwards brought to a more reſtrain'd Senſe. This Word was originally appropriated to the Inſcriptions of Gifts offer'd in the Temples; thence it came to thoſe which were hung up at the Temple-Gates; ſoon after it was transfer'd to thoſe Inſcriptions which were to adorn Publick Buildings; then to the Statues of the Gods or Heroes, or Men of Eminence, either Living or Dead. And theſe Inſcriptions were ſometimes compriz'd in one Word, ſometimes in two, and at other Times of ſeveral, and that both in Proſe and in Verſe.

The Shortneſs of theſe Inſcriptions took extremely, becauſe we are pleas'd to know that quickly of which we deſire to be inform'd; and their being put into Verſe, made them yet more agreeable; both by the Harmony of their Numbers, and their aptneſs to be retain'd by the Memory. Theſe were the Motives that made People touch upon all manner of Subjects in this ſhort Way; if they had occaſion to write to a Friend in a grave or merry Manner, or even to their Miſtreſſes, when the *Poets* had found this general Propenſion to this ſhort Way of Writing, they aſſum'd it into their Province as their Right. Thus came the Word *Epigram* to be given to any ſhort Copy of Verſes.

The Epigram is indeed originally a Sort of Poetry in Miniature, for it takes in all Subjects, both of the greater and leſſer Poeſy: As Praiſe, Diſpraiſe, Perſuaſion: Nay, *Voſſius* and ſome others have extended

it in ſome Meaſure to the Subjects of the *Epic*, *Tragic* and *Comic* Poems, which *Voſſius* thus expreſſes. It has this in common with the *Epic*, that it praiſes the Gods, Heroes, and Men of eminent Worth, as well as Trees, Cities, and the like. This it has common with *Tragedy*, that it relates thoſe Things which beget Grief, Pity, and Admiration (but by the Way *Voſſius* is out in this, for Admiration is not a tragical Paſſion.) *Grief*, by treating of cruel Events; *Pity*, by the Recital of them when they happen to ſuch us do not deſerve them, or between Relations, eſpecially Parents and Children, Brothers and Siſters, and the like. *Admiration*, by treating of future Events, eſpecially when beyond our expectation one produces another, as in the Life of *Oedipus*. Laſtly, it has this in common with the old Comedy, that it laſhes Men either by their own, or elſe by fictitious Names.

I have given you the moſt agreeable Side or Profile of this ſhort Poem, (which Sir *William Temple* calls the Chips or Scraps of Poetry) I ſhall now add what the admirable *Boileau* ſays upon it in his Art of Poetry.

The Epigram, *with little Art compos'd,*
Is one good Sentence in a Diſtich cloſ'd.

So that he allows but two Verſes to make an *Epigram*, contrary not only to *Martial*'s Practice in many, but even of *Catullus*. But to go on with this admirable *French* Critic and Poet.

Theſe Points, which by Italians *firſt were priz'd,*
Our antient Authors knew not, or deſpis'd:
To their falſe Pleaſures, quickly they invite
The Vulgar, dazled with their glaring Light.

But public Favour ſo increas'd their Pride,
They overwhelm'd Parnaſſus *with their Tide.*
The Madrigal *at firſt they overcome,*
And the proud Sonnet fell by the ſame Doom.
With them grave TRAGEDY *adorn'd her Flights,*
And mournful Elegy *her Funeral Rites.*
A Hero *never fail'd them on the Stage,*
Without his Point, *a Lover durſt not rage.*
The amorous Shepherds took more care to prove,
True to their Point, *than faithful to their Love.*
Each Word, like Janus, *had a double Face,*
And Proſe, *as well as* Verſe, *allow'd it Place.*
The Lawyer *with Conceits adorn'd his Speech,*
The Parſon *without* quibling *cou'd not Preach.*
At laſt affronted Reaſon look'd about,
And from all ſerious Matters ſhut them out;
Declar'd that none ſhou'd uſe them without Shame,
Except a Scattering *in the* Epigram;
Provided that by Art, and in due Time,
They turn'd upon the Thought, and not the Rhime.
Thus, in all Parts, Diſorders did abate,
Yet Quiblers in the Court had leave to prate;
Inſipid Feſters, and unpleaſant Fools,
A Corporation of dull punning Tools.
'Tis not, but that ſometimes a dextrous Muſe
May with Advantage a turn'd Senſe abuſe,
And, on a Word, may triſle with Addreſs,
But above all avoid the fond Exceſs,
And think not when your Verſe and Senſe are Lame,
With a dull Point *to tag your* Epigram.

Thus far *Boileau* on the *Epigram*, by which you may eaſily form your Taſte, not only of that little Poem itſelf, but of that vicious Mixture, which our Writers too commonly make of it in the ſublimer Parts of *Poetry*.

But

But to give you Rules yet more plain and peculiar, I ſhall quote thoſe in my *Engliſh Grammar*.*

The Epigram *in Shortneſs takes Delight,*
And tho' all Subjects are its proper Right,
Yet each in One *alone can only write.*
Two Parts this little Whole *muſt ſtill compoſe,*
Recital of the Subject, *and the* Cloſe.
To make this Poem perfect, be your Care
That Beauty, Point, and Brevity appear.
That you the needful Brevity may claim,
Let one *thing only be your lawful Aim.*
And in few Words that only *thing expreſs,*
But Words that Force, and Energy confeſs.
BEAUTY's *harmonious Symmetry of Parts,*
Which to the Whole *an Excellence imparts;*
Adorn'd with ſweet Simplicity and Truth,
The Diction *ſtill Polite and ne'er uncouth:*
This BEAUTY Sweetneſs *always muſt comprize,*
Which from the Subject well expreſs'd will riſe.
The POINT *in the Concluſion takes its Place,*
And is the Epigram's *peculiar Grace.*
Some unexpected, and ſome biting Thought,
With poinant Wit, and ſharp Expreſſion fraught.
From two to twenty Verſes it extends,
But beſt when two or four it not tranſcends.

But I think I have been long enough on ſo ſhort a Poem, and indeed on a Poem, for which I have very little Eſteem. I ſhall now advance to the *Paſtoral*; much more Excellent in all its Parts, and more juſtly claiming the Name of *Poetry*, as being indeed an *Imitation*, without which LAUDON has formerly made it out that this Art cannot ſubſiſt.

Though the Original of PASTORAL, both as to the Time of its appearing in the World, and its In-

* Recommended by *Iſaac Bickerſtaff*.

ventors, be very uncertain, and therefore very obſcure; yet I ſhall endeavour to give you as good an Account of that Particular, as I can any way furniſh myſelf with from the moſt curious inquiſitive Authors.

To ſay nothing of its Divine Original from *Apollo* when he kept the Flocks of *Admetus*, or of *Mercury* when he was a Shepherd, or even of *Pan*, though the Rural Harmony is attributed by *Virgil* himſelf to that God, that I may not entertain you with more Fables invented by the Poets of this Kind to raiſe the Dignity of their Verſe. The Invention of this *Paſtoral* Poem is attributed by ſome to *Daphnis*, who was a *Sicilian* Shepherd the Son of *Mercury* and a *Nymph*, and bred up by the *Nymphs*, and who was an excellent Muſician, which it was the Cuſtom of the *Sicilian* Shepherds to be even in the Time of *Diodorus Siculus*, who attributes this Poem to *Daphne*.

Diomedes tells us, that the PASTORAL POEM, as ſome thought, was born at *Laconia*, but according to others, in *Sicily*. For on this Head there were ſeveral Diſputes between the *Lacedemonians* and the *Sicilians*. As to the Canto, of its Riſe in *Laconia* they give you this Account, that upon the Approach of *Xerxes* into *Greece*, it was a received Opinion that all the Inhabitants fled into various Parts for fear of the *Barbarians*, and the Virgins being confin'd by the ſame Fear to their lurking Holes, could not perform the ſame Chorus and Ceremony uſually at that Time paid to *Diana Caryatis*, no Creature appearing to the celebrating of the Solemnity; upon which the Country Shepherds repaired to the City, that the Sacred Rites ſhould not be broke off, and hence the Name and Poem had its riſe.

Its Origin in *Sicily* is thus related: *Sicily*, before *Hiero* had taken *Syracuſe*, was afflicted with a Plague or Epidemic Diſtemper; they at laſt appeas'd *Diana* by frequent and daily Ceremonies, eſpecially the Country People; whence it grew into a Cuſtom that the Rural Inhabitants at certain Times in Company enter'd the

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Theatres, and there ſung their Verſes for the Prize and Victory. There was in this Ceremony a great Leaf filled with the Images of Wild Beaſts, a Boracchio with Wine, and a Bag full of Pulſe; on their Heads there was a Crown, in their Hand a ſtudded Crook of a Shepherd, and ſo the Multitude went round to all the Doors of the Victors, and ſo out of their Basket ſtrow'd them with the Pulſe. There is yet another Occaſion mentioned, and that is from the Flight of *Oreſtes* and his Siſter from *Tauris* into *Sicily*, where he inſtituted this ſort of Poem in Honour of *Diana*, whoſe Prieſteſs *Iphigenia* was. In ſhort from the Doric Dialect in which theſe Paſtorals were always written, it is pretty plain that they aroſe either in *Lacedemon* or *Sicily*, where that was ſpoken, and *Moſchus* and *Theocritus*, the greateſt of the Poets in that kind, were both *Sicilians*.

Having thus given you the Account of its Original, though very obſcure, as that of all great Things has ever been, we now proceed to the Art of the Compoſition, which is ſomething more material, and much more certain.

To render the Critical Diſcourſe as eaſy and entertaining as poſſible, I ſhall give you in Verſe the Judgment of *Boileau*, the preſent Duke of *Buckingham*, and others, as they offer themſelves on the ſeveral Parts of Poetry under our Conſideration. *Horace* among the *Romans*, and our *Engliſh Horace*, his Grace, in his Eſſay on Poetry has not taken the leaſt Notice of the Paſtoral, in the juſt Formation of which, hear what the great *Boileau* has left in his Art of Poetry.

As on a gaudy Day, ſome Shepherdeſs
Does not her Head with ſparkling Diamonds dreſs:
But without Gold, or Pearl, or coſtly Scents,
Gathers from Neighb'ring Fields her Ornaments;
So, unaffected, is the PASTORAL *Strain,*
Fair without Pomp, and elegantly plain.

Its humble Method nothing has of fierce,
And hates the rattling of Lee's *Tragic Verse:*
There Native Beauty pleases, and excites,
And never with rash Sounds the Ear affrights.
But in this Stile a Rhimer, often spent,
In rage throws by his Rural Instrument;
And vainly, when disorder'd Thoughts abound,
Amidst the Eclogue makes the Trumpet sound:
PAN *flies, alarm'd, into the Neighb'ring Woods,*
And frighted Nymphs dive down into the Floods.
Another, in an abject clownish Stile,
Makes Shepherds speak a Language base and vile;
His stupid Writings most profoundly creep,
Barren of Wit, Provocatives of Sleep:
You'd swear Tom Durfey, *in his rustic Strains,*
Was Quav'ring to the Milkmaids and the Swains;
Changing, without respect to Sound or Dress,
Strephon *and* Phillis, *into* Tom *and* Bess.
'Twixt these Extremes, 'tis hard to please the Town;
Read Virgil, Spenser, *Poets of Renown,*
And equally avoid the Courtier and the Clown.
Be their soft Lines, by ev'ry Grace inspir'd,
Your constant Pattern practis'd and admir'd.
By them alone you'll quickly comprehend
How Poets, without Shame, may condescend
To sing of Gardens, Fields, of Flow'rs, and Fruit,
To stir up Shepherds, and to tune the Flute;
Of Love's Reward to tell the happy Hour,
Daphne *a Tree,* Narcissus *made a Flow'r:*
And by what helps the Eclogue you may raise,
To make it worthy Halifax's *Praise.*
This of such Writings is the nicest Part;
He who writes thus, will shew a Master's Art.

You find *Boileau* recommends to you the reading of *Virgil* and *Theocritus*, that you may arrive at the just Stile and Manner of the PASTORAL. We have them both in the *English* Tongue, and therefore the unlearned in

in *Greek* and *Latin* may make their Advantage of their Peruſal. Give me leave to recommend another of much more Modern Date, I mean a Cotemporary of our own, Mr. *Ambroſe Philips*, who is beyond Controverſy the third at leaſt in this kind of Poeſy. In him you will find the true and genuine Simplicity of the *Paſtoral* both in the Diction and in the Sentiments, that is, in the Language, and in the Thoughts.

This ſort of Poem has been the Bow, in which moſt of our young Dablers in Rhime have try'd their Strength; but alas! not one beſides Mr. *Philips* has hit the Mark; and if you compare him with the very beſt of *France* or *Italy*, you will eaſily perceive how much he has excelled them all. I dare not ſet him on a foot with *Virgil*, it would look too much like Flattery, in an Age when Envy will not allow Juſtice to the living Author; but I am very much deceiv'd if Poſterity do not afford him a far greater Eſteem than he at preſent enjoys, though I think all tolerable Judges give him the firſt Place among the Moderns. But to proceed more directly to the Rules of Paſtoral.

POETRY in all its Parts is an *Imitation*, and *Paſtoral Poeſy* is an Imitation of the Lives and Converſation of *Shepherds*, or rather of *rural Actions*. And for this very Reaſon there ought to be an Air of Piety maintained through the whole, the Perſons introduc'd being uncorrupted, innocent and ſimple, ſuch as *Shepherds*, *Goatherds*, *Cowherds*, *Pruners*, and the like. We ſhou'd therefore always find repreſented in theſe Characters that ancient Innocence, and unpractis'd, and undeſigning Plainneſs, which was ſuppos'd by a ſort of general Conſent to have been then in the World; and which is viſible in *Theocritus*, *Virgil*, and Mr. *Philips*, as you will find by reading the beſt Tranſlations of the two former, and the admirable Compoſitions of the laſt. This is conciſely expreſs'd in Verſe by a Modern Author on this Subject.

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The PASTORAL, *that ſings of happy* Swains,
And harmleſs Nymphs *that haunt the Woods, and* [*Plains,*
Should, through the whole, diſcover every where
Their old Simplicity, *and* Pious Air.
And in the Characters of Maids *and* Youth,
Unpractis'd Plainneſs, Innocence and Truth.

The ſame Author goes on:

Each PASTORAL *a little Plot ſhou'd own,*
Which, as it muſt be ſimple, muſt be one.
With ſhort Digreſſions it will yet diſpenſe,
Nor needs it always Allegoric Senſe.

Perhaps there is nothing in which the Ancients excelled the Moderns more, than in always forming ſome Plot, Plan or Deſign to their Poems, which guided and led them from the Beginning to the End, while every Verſe depended on the former, and continued to carry on the ſaid Deſign. Whereas the Moderns have thought it ſufficient to throw together a Company of Rhimes independent of each other, and directed to no manner of End, ſo that the Antients were Poets indeed, the Moderns generally ſpeaking are Verſifyers. This we ſhall ſee by what I ſhall deliver on the ſeveral ſorts of Poems of which I ſhall diſcourſe.

But to the preſent.

Every *Paſtoral Poem* muſt have a little *Plot* or viſible *Deſign* or *Fable*, to which we may juſtly give the Name of a *Paſtoral Scene*. But this *Plot*, *Fable*, or *Deſign* muſt be ſimple, and one not compounded of two or more, as the Moderns have introduc'd into the *Drama*, contrary to right Reaſon and the conſtant Practice of the *Antients*, which in Inventions made by them ought to be ſacred and inviolable. Though this *Plot* muſt be ſimple, and one, yet this Simplicity and Unity does by no means exclude *Digreſſions*, if they are ſhort. The

Poet

Poet does not lie under any neceſſity of making his Plot *Allegorical*, that is, to have ſome real Perſons meant by thoſe fictitious Names of the Shepherds introduc'd.

Virgil every where is a ſtrict obſerver of theſe Rules of the *Plot*, and moſt eminently ſo in his firſt *Paſtoral*, which great and juſt Critics have made the Standard of this ſort of Poem. This will appear yet plainer by a ſhort Argument of the firſt, and of two or three more.

The Argument of the firſt Paſtoral of *Virgil*, is thus: *Melibœus* an unfortunate Shepherd is introduc'd with *Tityrus* a Shepherd under more fortunate Circumſtances. *Melibœus* addreſſes his Complaint of his Sufferings and Baniſhment to *Tityrus*, who in the midſt of theſe Calamities enjoys his Flocks, and there with the higheſt Senſe of the Favour expreſſes his Gratitude to the Benefactor, from whom ſo great and peculiar a Benefit was deriv'd; while *Melibœus* ſends forth his Accuſations againſt Fortune, and the fatal Events of a Civil War, and bids farewel to his Native Country.

By this you find that the firſt *Paſtoral* of *Virgil* is a *Dialogue*. The ſecond is a Paſtoral Complaint, without Dialogue. *Corydon* in a Courtſhip entirely Rural and Paſtoral deplores the Coyneſs of *Alexis*, to whoſe good Graces he recommends himſelf for the Comelineſs of his Perſon, and his Skill in playing on the rural Pipe. He invites him into the Country, promiſing him the Pleaſures of that agreeable Retreat, and a Preſent of *Nuts* and *Apples*. But in the Concluſion, finding all his Courtſhip in vain, he reſolves to quit ſo barren a Paſſion, and wholly employ himſelf in his Shepherd's Buſineſs.

Here is plainly a *Deſign*, by keeping to which every thing depends on that which went before, and all carries on the ſame End.

Menalcas, *Damœtas*, and *Palæmon* are introduced in the third, in the following Manner— *Damœtas* and *Menalcas*, after ſome Country Raillery, agree to try which of the two had the beſt Skill in *Song*; and that their Neighbour *Palæmon* ſhall be judge of their Performance.

formance. Who having heard them both, declares his Incapacity to decide the Controverſy, and ſo leaves the Matter undetermined.

Theſe three Arguments are ſufficient to prove the Neceſſity of a Plan, little Fable or Plot; if you deſire more, conſult Mr. *Dryden*'s Tranſlation of *Virgil*, and thoſe Verſions we have of *Theocritus*, nor forget to caſt your Eye on Mr. *Ambroſe Philip*'s *Paſtorals*.

The Connections of this Poem ſhou'd be negligent, and the Tranſitions eaſy; for too ſtrict a Regularity in theſe, will make the Poem ſtiff and formal.

As for the Matter which this ſort of Poem admits, it conſiſts of *Philoſophic Queſtions*, *Riddles*, *Parables*, which ought here to be eminent, for theſe give a Reliſh of the antient Manner of Writing. Vows, Praiſe, Promiſes, Complaints, Mirth, Joy, and Congratulations are admitted in this Poem.

The Stile of this Poem, as you find from what I quoted from *Boileau*, ought always to be natural, clear and elegant; yet to have nothing of a ſublime, haughty or fierce Air; nor ſet off with ſuch Ornaments as are not at all agreeable to the Humbleneſs of the Subject. The Sentences ſhould be ſhort and ſmart, and the Verſification ſmooth, eaſy and harmonious, without the leaſt affectation of Grandeur and Majeſty, except when required by the Subject, as in the *Pollio* of *Virgil*. And yet if I dare preſume to give my Opinion, the *Pollio* loſes ſo much of the Paſtoral Kind, as it gains of Majeſty and Force.

But then you muſt not, like *Randal*, make the Stile low and baſe, and turn *Strephon* and *Phillis* into *Tom* and *Beſs*, which that ingenious Son of the great *Ben. Johnſon* did, imagining by that to make it more on a Level with his *Cotſwold* Shepherds, but far from thoſe of *Arcadia* and *Sicily*. The great *Spenſer* fell into an Error in the Stile, which Mr. *Philips* has admirably avoided; for imitating the Greek *Doric*, he gives us a Northern Dialect, which renders his Paſtorals unintelligible, with-

ithout the help of *Spelman*, or ſome other Gloſſariſt. or the Doric Dialect was familiar to all *Greece*, as be- ng us'd by their greateſt Authors as occaſion required; ut no Body before this extraordinary Poet ever writ n any of our own Country Dialects, whether Weſtern r Northern, *&c.*

There have been poor and malicious Endeavours made ſe of to ridicule that of Mr. *Philips*; but the Effects ere ſo wretched, and the Malice ſo viſible, that they re already dead, and therefore not worth our Notice.

Battles, and all manner of Warlike Affairs are en- irely excluded from this ſort of Poeſy. As for the lame of your Shepherds, *&c.* you may either feign hem, or take ſuch as you find already receiv'd in the eſt Authors. To conclude this Subject, a Paſtoral Po- m ought never to exceed one hundred Lines, and rare- ſeventy, which is much about the length of theſe of *irgil*, allowing for the difference betwixt our *Engliſh* nd the *Latin* Verſes.

Thus much I have thought convenient to trouble you ith on this Poem; and I have been the longer, becauſe either *Horace*, nor the ESSAY ON POETRY have id any thing of the Matter, that I might leave no art of the Art of Poetry untouch'd, eſpecially a Part which *Theocritus* and *Virgil* have ſo excell'd, as to ain the Admiration of all Nations, where they are nown and underſtood, to this very Day.

For my part (ſaid *Manilia*) I was always an Admirer the *Paſtoral*, ev'n as we had it, the rude, indigeſted roduct of wild and ignorant Fancy. But I confeſs hat you have ſaid has given me a perfect Averſion to ur *Engliſh* Shepherds, but has rais'd my Adoration of oſe of *Arcadia*, and *Sicily*. So that I am reſolv'd to urn all my own Eſſays that way, and if I ever venture ſcribble more, it ſhall be after I have employ'd my ours in peruſing *Virgil*, and thoſe of *Theocritus*, that e have, and reading frequently thoſe of our *Engliſh* ard Mr. *Philips*.

I muſt

I must (pursued *Tyro*) agree with the fair *Manilia* in her Conviction on this Point, and own, I begin to view Poetry with other Eyes than I have hitherto done. I confess I have often with Indignation thought of Sir *Evremont*'s Reproach to the *English* for want of Taste, and always attributed that Reflection to the natural Vanity of the *French*, who prefer their own Writers, not only to all the Moderns, but to the Antients themselves: but I am sensible that this Author had but too much Reason for what he said; though I cannot discover the Cause of a Defect, which I now begin to think too visible.

As for the Cause (said I) we will endeavour to give the best Account of it that we can. I have often endeavoured to persuade myself into an high Opinion of my own Country, from the brave Actions the *English* have done, and the considerable Figure they have made in the World for above six hundred Years, to go no higher. But when I consider the Writers of *Polite Arts*, and their Patrons, I mean among the Men of Power, I cannot but think there is a strong smatch of Barbarism yet remaining amongst us, not much short of that in *Lapland* itself; nay, there is more of the Simplicity of Nature in two Songs of the *Laplanders*, contain'd in the History of that Country, than in an hundred of ours.

But this is not caus'd by want of Genius in our Natives; for in spight of discouragement and neglect of the Great Ones, we have seen a *Spenser*, a *Milton*, a *Dryden*, and some others appear, who have excelled all the Modern World in their Performances, and have prov'd formidable Rivals to most of the Antients themselves. So that the Defect lies not in the Climate, but in the Men of Power, who being generally ignorant of Art, bestow their Smiles on vile Poetasters; if they shew any Favour at all to Writers, it is sure to be to the worst. They are the Creatures of their vile Applause, and as such they are fond of them.

O

One Reaſon of this is, that a *Public Spirit* is what is arce ſo much as known, but the Public is the Dupe to ll that can come into any ſhare of Management; there a rapacious Avarice ſpread through the thriving Part f the Nation, which damps all generous Sentiments hich would enlarge the Soul, and raiſe Men up to hat Dignity, to which their Nature ſeems to have been ppointed by Providence in the admirable Faculties of he Soul.

This generally proceeds from Ignorance, and a very aulty Education, which falls into the Hands of Merce-ary Pedants, who, to ſpeak the moſt laviſhly in their raiſe, are but meer *Grammarians.* So that inſtead of etting their Pupils into the great Excellencies of the uthors they read, they lay out all their Time in ex-laining of them, and pointing out ſome beautiful Ex-reſſions; by which Means many a Youth, who can re-eat you half *Virgil* and *Horace*, are totally ignorant of he real Beauties of thoſe Authors. Which has been he Source and Generation of all thoſe Verſifyers, which ave peſter'd the Preſs and the Stage. Another Defect n Education is, that if a Student came to any conſide-able School, or to the Univerſities, who has the Ex-ectation of a good Fortune or Eſtate, there is little Care taken in his Inſtruction; he is indulg'd to his own inclinations, and gains only a Vanity of having been at he *Univerſity*, while his Servitor has only gained that Learning which he neglected. Whereas in a juſt Edu-ation, no regard ought to be had to the Quality of he Student, nor any Excuſe to be allowed on that Ac-ount to a Remiſsneſs in his Studies. Whereas, as hings are now manag'd, there ſeems no Means of ba-iſhing Ignorance from the Great Ones; and as long as hat prevails, it is impoſſible a good Taſte can gain ooting, ſince Applauſe muſt paſs through their Hands, who know nothing of the Merits of Writing.

I deſire you would make this general Reflection ſome ſmall Allowance; ſince it is certain that there are in Re-

ality

ality ſome Exceptions to it, and young Perſons of Di-
tinction and Fortune, who, by a natural Propenſity t
Learning, diſdain the Indulgence that is given to the
Birth and Eſtate. I could name ſome, but that I ſha
not deſcend to particulars ſo far as to ſingle out ſuch a
I know, leſt thoſe not mention'd ſhould conclud
themſelves contained in the general Rule, which yet the
may not be, though their Excellence is not come to my
Knowledge.

Yet though it cannot be denied that Monſieur St.
Evremont is true in his Cenſure of our Taſte in general,
yet he has diſcover'd himſelf to have not a much better
in his mixt Eſſays on *Tragedy*, *Comedy*, and *Opera's*;
which abound in a bad Taſte, and Judgment, not to
ſay Ignorance of the Subject, he pretends to decide up-
on.

But now, if you pleaſe, we will proceed to *Elegy*;
they agreeing to my Motion, I thus went on.

The Origin or firſt Inventor of this ſort of Poetry
is very obſcure, as indeed thoſe of all the others are
not much clearer. As to the Name, it is deriv'd from
a *Greek* Word often uſed to be repeated by thoſe who
deplor'd the Death of any Perſon, which in the Riſe of
this Poem was the only Subject of *Elegy*, according to
Horace, *Ovid*, and all the antient Writers. Some at-
tribute the Name to the Lamentations of King *Midas*
over the Corps of his dead Mother; but the Inventor
of the ſort of Verſe peculiar to it, ſome attribute to
TERPANDER of *Colophon*, others to THEOCLES of
Naxos or *Eretria*.

The two firſt Poets eminent in this Kind, who, if not
the Inventors, were at leaſt the firſt who grew famous
for it, CALLINUS and MIMNERMUS: Others
reckon four principal Writers of the ELEGY in *Greece*,
that is, CALLINUS of *Epheſus*, MIMNERMUS of
Colophon; PHILETAS of *Coos*, and CALLIMACHUS
of *Cyrene*. MIMNERMUS flouriſh'd in the 35th
Olympiade, ſo that he was more antient than the ſeven
Wiſe-

Viſemen of *Greece*; and yet ſo early were other Subjects admitted into the Elegy beſide Grief, that *Mimnermus* conſiſted almoſt entirely of Love.

Next to *Mimnermus*, the following two were the moſt celebrated for the Excellence of the ELEGY, CALLIMACHUS of *Cyrena*, and PHILETAS of *Coos*; the latter flouriſh'd in the Time of PHILIP of *Macedon*, ALEXANDER the Great, and ſome of his Succeſſors; and was Preceptor or Tutor to PTOLEMY *Philadelphius*; nor was his Genius confin'd to the *Elegy*, for he compos'd *Epigrams*, and other ſorts of Poems; but by Epigrams we muſt not ſuppoſe ſuch as now uſurp that Name, and which derive themſelves from *Martial*; for the Beauty of the *Greek* Epigrams, as well as thoſe of *Catullus*, depended not upon a Point, or the Turn of Words, but Thoughts.

Nor muſt we here forget the famous *Tyrtæus*, to whoſe *Elegies* the Preſervation of the *Lacedemonian* State has been attributed by the Antients. By Birth an *Athenian*, and deputed General of the *Lacedemonians*, and this as early as the *36th Olympiade*, ſo that he ſeems to have been Cotemporary with MIMNERMUS.

All that *Horace* gives us of the *Elegy*, is, That

ELEGIES *were at firſt deſign'd for Grief,*
Tho' now we uſe them to expreſs our Joy;
But to whoſe Muſe we owe that ſort of Verſe,
Is undecided by the Men of Skill. [Roſcom. Hor.

Among the *Romans* the moſt eminent were OVID, TIBULLUS, and PROPERTIUS.

The ELEGY, *that loves a mournful Stile,*
With Hair unbound weeps at the Funeral Pile:
It paints the Lovers Torments and Delights,
A Miſtreſs flatters, threatens and invites.

But

But well these Raptures if you'll make us see,
You must know Love, *as well as Poetry.*
I hate those Lukewarm Authors, whose forc'd Fire
In a cold Stile describe a hot Desire.
That sigh by Rule, and, raging in cold Blood,
Their sluggish Muse whip to an Amorous Mood;
Their Transports feign'd appear but flat and vain,
They always Sigh, and always hug their Chain.
Adore their Prison, and their Sufferings bless,
Make Sense and Reason quarrel as they please.
'Twas not of old in this affected Tone,
That smooth TIBULLUS *made his Amorous Moan:*
Nor Ovid *when instructed from above,*
By Natures Rules he taught the Art of Love.

This sort of Poem was first made use of in Grief, in Funeral Ceremonies and Lamentations; then in the amorous Complaints of Lovers, who afterwards introduced their Joys in their Success with their Mistresses.

Nor was the ELEGY long confin'd to Grief and Love, but was extended to various other Subjects, as those of THEOGNIS to Moral Precepts; the Hair of *Berenice* by CALLIMACHUS, which was translated by *Catullus* into *Latin* in the same kind; and *Ovid's Fasti*, and other Subjects.

Amidst the various Subjects allowed to the *Elegy*, we find that BOILEAU mentions only two, *viz.*, Funeral Grief or Lamentations, and LOVE. Love indeed seems to be the Queen of this beautiful Province, and has always appear'd in a Sovereign Preeminence; for neither the *Greek* nor *Latin* Poets, who have written this Kind on other Subjects, have attain'd that Praise and general Esteem as in those, where they touch only on Love; and therefore *Boileau* is perfectly in the right, when he requires the Elegiac Poet to know Love as well as Poetry, which indeed the *French* Poets discover very little Skill in.

*

But let us proceed to what is on this Head delivered his Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

Next ELEGY *of ſweet, but ſolemn Voice,*
And of a Subject grave, exacts the Choice;
The Praiſe of Beauty, Valour, Wit contains,
And there too oft deſpairing Love complains.
In vain alas! for who by Wit is mov'd?
That Phœnix *ſhe deſerves to be belov'd.*
But noiſy Nenſenſe, and ſuch Fops as vex
Mankind, take moſt with that Fantaſtic Sex.
This to the Praiſe of thoſe who better knew;
The many raiſe the Value of the Few.
But here, as all our Sex too oft have try'd,
Women have drawn my wand'ring Thoughts aſide.
Their greateſt Fault, who in this Kind have writ,
Is not defect in Words, or want of Wit.
But ſhou'd this Muſe harmonious Numbers yield,
And ev'ry Couplet be with Fancy fill'd:
If yet a juſt Cohevence be not made
Between each Thought, and the whole Model laid
So right, that ev'ry Line may higher riſe,
Like goodly Mountains, till they reach the Skies:
Such Trifles may of late perhaps have paſt,
And may be lik'd a while, but never laſt.
'Tis Epigram, *'tis Point, 'tis what you will,*
But not an ELEGY, *nor writ with ſkill,*
No PANEGYRIC, *nor a* COOPERS-HILL.

Thus far my Lord Duke in his admirable ESSAY ON POETRY. But I muſt think, that his Grace's Criticiſm in this ſort of Poeſy has a nearer regard to what in our Tongue may perhaps be plac'd in that kind; and this Surmize is confirm'd by the Faults his Grace finds in the Elegy Writers, and the two which he names as Examples of Excellence. For firſt, the *Greek* and *Latin* Writers of Elegy are not guilty of Epigram or Point in their Poems of this Nature, and in *Ovid* there is ſuch an exact

exact Coherence as my Lord requires; I know it is thought that *Tibullus* follow'd this Method, but Line after Line, without propoſing any certain Mo or Plan of the whole Piece, which ſhould direct him.

Another Reaſon of my Opinion is, that his Gr gives but a fourth Place to *Love* in her own pecul Province, which agrees much better with the Moder than with the Antients. The Rule which his Gr lays down for forming the Model is of admirable U not only in this ſort of Poetry, but indeed in all ſor as being the only Mother of Order, without wh there could be no valuable Beauty. And to praiſe a P em for a fine Line, or a happy Turn of Expreſſion, like praiſing a moſt horrible and diſtorted Creature for Beauty, becauſe ſhe happens to have a handſome Ha or Foot.

I dare not venture to diſſent from his Grace, o ſhould queſtion very much whether the *Panegyric*, *Coopers-Hill*, wou'd eaſily come into the Notion of E *gy* according to the Practice of the Antients. For cording to OVID, a great Maſter in this kind, Sublim Subjects, and Heroic Majeſty are not agreeable to t *Elegy*, which ought to be contented with its native M diocrity. There is no *Achilles* found in the Verſe *Callimachus* (ſays *Ovid*) nor *Cydippe* in thoſe of *Hom* And therefore deſcribing the Perſon of Elegy in h third Book of his Love Verſes, he does not praiſe h for her Majeſty, but her lovely Countenance, ſoft i thin Garment. And in his *Faſti* the ſame Poet compla that he had been forc'd to apply the Elegiac Numbers a more Sublime Matter than was uſual to them.

But that I may omit nothing which may contribu to the beautifying of this Poem, I will add ſome he which I gather from the Practice of the Antients. Antiquities, or antient Hiſtory or Fables. There is n thing more obvious than this through *Ovid* and *Prop tius*; *Tibullus* indeed has not done it.

In the Funeral *Elegy* it has been the Practice to addreſs to the Father, Mother, or other ſurviving Relation, as is evident from that of *Pedo Albinovanus* on *Druſus Germanicus*, the Son in Law of *Auguſtus*, and the Brother of *Tiberius* afterwards Emperor and Succeſſour to *Auguſtus*. Theſe Poems uſually likewiſe began from ſome God, according to Circumſtances of the deceas'd. Thus, on the Death of a Poet they begun with *Apollo*, of a Philoſopher with *Minerva*, of a Soldier with *Mars*, of a Lover with *Venus* or *Cupid*, of a Country Man or one of a rural Life with PAN, *Faunus* or *Pales*; of a Seaman with *Neptune* or the Nymphs, ſpecially from the River God where he dy'd.

There ought to be in the *Elegy* a native Elegance and Clearneſs, as well as Softneſs of Expreſſion, which ought to be always equal. Frequent Colliſions or the cutting off of Syllables are Faults not to be admitted; in *Engliſh* indeed there ought to be none, but what are ſo eaſy and uſual that they give it no manner of Roughneſs, which is oppoſite to the Beauty and Perfection of this Poem; and it muſt have a ſort of Sweetneſs which adds a Decorum and Beauty, and ſomething entirely Delicate.

There is one vulgar Rule which I will not omit, becauſe in the general it has been the Practice of the beſt and greateſt Maſters in this Art; and that is that the Senſe ſhould be concluded in two Lines, not but there have been ſome Exceptions to this Rule, though very few.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe on the Elegy from a late Author.

No glittering Points, nor any nice Conceit,
Muſt load the Elegy *with foreign Weight.*
Paſſion and Nature here avow their Right,
And with diſdain throw back the mean Delight.

For we are never to admit any Epigrammatic Points, and Conceits, none of the *Fine things* as the Ladies and

half Wits call them, and declare for them in all Place and every ſort of Poem, and which indeed moſt of our celebrated Writers have been too guilty of: Theſe as they are here abominable, ſo they give Place to greater and nobler Beauties, thoſe of Nature and the Paſſions.

Remember that the Diction every where
Be gentle, clean, perſpicuous, and clear,
Correct; the Manners all along expreſs,
In every Place the Manners ſtill confeſs.

The Diction of the *Elegy* ſhould be ſtandard and correct, clean, gentle, perſpicuous, expreſſive of the Manners, tender and pathetic, or full of the Paſſions, but never oppreſs'd or debauch'd with fine Sayings or exquiſite Sentences; it is wonderfully adorn'd with frequent Commiſerations, Complaints, Exclamations, and Addreſſes to Things and Perſons; the Words of feigned Perſons, or Things inanimate made to ſpeak, with ſhort Digreſſions, yet pertinent to the Subject; nor does it receive a little Beauty from Alluſions to Sayings, Examples not only from the *Like* but the *Unlike*; and Contraries: Sometimes Compariſons are made, and ſmart and ſhort Sentences thrown in to confirm what is propos'd.

No cutting off of Vowels muſt be found;
That wou'd deſtroy the ſmooth and flowing Sound,
Which in the Elegy muſt ſtill abound.

And now I think, I have from the Antients and the Moderns delivered to you all the Rules of the Art and Beauty of the *Elegy*, I refer you for Examples to thoſe of *Ovid* tranſlated into the *Engliſh* Tongue.

Having here made an End, I waited for the Opinion of my Hearers, to anſwer any difficulty they might ſtart; but a profound Silence continu'd ſome Moments, when *Tyro* addreſſing himſelf to *Manilia*:

Ha

Ha! Fair *Manilia* (ſaid he) to what diſtant Region of Thought are you flown? What wholly loſt in one of the Modiſh ABSENCES of our Modern Wits? Who, to expreſs a ſingularity of Taſte and Conduct, frequently forget or ſeem to forget the Company and the Converſation they are engag'd in.

That is an Affectation (reply'd *Manilia*) I have not yet been ſo fond as to fall into; beſides Pleaſure is too prevalent in our Sex to ſuffer us to ſeem inſenſible of its Preſence ſo far as to ramble from the Enjoyment. I am too highly ſatisfy'd with the Diſcoveries I have heard from our Friend *Gamaliel*, to wander in the leaſt Thought from the preſent Entertainment.

I am pleas'd (aſſum'd I) that what I have ſaid is agreeable to the ingenious *Manilia*; a few of her Apprehenſion and good Senſe wou'd be a great Means of delivering Poetry from its moſt dangerous Enemies, the Friends of the *Poetaſters* in Vogue, I mean the *Ladies*, who are generally too indulgent in their Applauſe of Scribblers, becauſe they want Judgment to place that where it ought to be.

How was that (ſaid *Tyro*) in *Athens*? Or had the *Athenian* Ladies more Knowledge and a finer Taſte than thoſe of *England*. As for that (reply'd I) it is a Point, perhaps, not ſo eaſy to decide by any certainty of Hiſtory; but this I ſhall venture to ſay, that if the Ladies of *Athens* had a juſter Guſto than thoſe of *London*, ſo had the Men likewiſe, as is evident from the Writings of thoſe two Cities, and the Succeſs they met with in each. Perhaps the Ladies of *Athens*, as they had little to do in Public Affairs, had leſs in thoſe of Letters, and Poetry directed them, and not they Poetry: Not that the Female Sex were excluded from *Parnaſſus*; no, we ſhall in the very next Diſcourſe, of *Lyric Poeſy*, ſhow that many of them excell'd in that particular, and ſome carried the Prize from *Pindar* himſelf; but indeed it muſt be owned that neither *Greece* nor *Rome* ever produc'd a Lady ſo hardy and adventurous as to undertake the Drama, tho'

ſeveral of our *Engliſh* Ladies have claim'd a Prerogative, Nature ſeems to have deign'd them in all Nations and all Times but ours.

For my Part (ſaid *Manilia*) I ſhall only ſay this for the daring Poeteſſes of *Britain*, that the ill Performances of the Men, ſeem to juſtify their Undertaking, ſince they cou'd diſcover nothing in much the greater Part of them that cou'd ſtrike them with deſpair of coming up to what they found met with ſucceſs and pleas'd the Town; the only ſtandard of Excellence with the Majority of the People.

But if the Antients as much excell'd us in the Drama, (as I begin to fear they did) as in thoſe other Parts of Poetry of which we have already heard *Gamaliel* diſcourſe, I ſhall eaſily agree that the Province of *Tragedy*, nay and Comedy too, are quite beyond their Power to rule.

I am ſo engaged with my Reflections in what has been juſt ſaid on the Elegy, that all I have ſeen of our own ſeems flat and inſipid, and I have ſuch Ideas of it, that if they ſhou'd exceed the Reality, yet I fancy they would raiſe much higher Pleaſures in this Poem than we as yet find in it, at leaſt in the *Engliſh*.

This makes me willing to hear what *Gamaliel* has to offer on the *Lyric*, a Poem in which he owns the *Ladies* have excell'd. Wherefore if you are not already quite tir'd with inſtructing the Ignorant, I become a Petitioner, *Gamaliel*, for the Purſuit of your admirable Diſcoveries, which ſeem ſo eaſy and obvious, that no Learning but common Senſe, and a Taſte, are needful for our Improvement.

There can be (ſaid I) no greater Pleaſure to me (fair *Manilia*) I can aſſure you, than the ſpreading uſeful Knowledge, eſpecially in an Art of ſuch real and intrinſic Value as that of Poetry; and this Satisfaction is more than doubled when I find that I ſpeak not in vain, but that what Inſtructions the Learned have furniſh'd me with, are generouſly receiv'd by my Miniſtry. I ſhall therefore,

fore, as in the former, give you a ſhort View of its Riſe and Hiſtory, and ſo haſten to the Rules neceſſary to the juſt Performance in it.

I will not waſte my Time, nor your Patience with a Pedantic Diſcourſe of the Original of the *Name*, nor the various Meanings of it in the *Greek* Tongue; nor ſhall I enquire into the ſeveral Ways of ſinging the Ode either to the Flute or other Wind Muſic, or to the *Lyre* or Lute as we render it, or any other String or Corded Inſtrument, or which were adapted to join Dancing to the Muſical Performance; as things of very little Conſequence to our preſent Buſineſs, which is only to ſhow the Art of a juſt Compoſure in this kind.

It is my Opinion, that this is the moſt antient of all the ſeveral Sorts of Poems that have been invented by the harmonious Race of Poets. The *Greeks* indeed make *Orpheus* the Inventor of it, but I believe we may go much higher if we ſtep among the *Hebrews*; the Song of *Moſes* and of *Miriam* his Siſter we find in *Exodus*, Chap. 15, much before the Time that *Cadmus* introduc'd ſo much as the *Greek Alphabet*. And it is reaſonable to think that *Moſes* and this Propheteſs was not the firſt who perform'd in this kind, which was both to Muſic and Dancing, like thoſe afterwards of *Pindar* and others.

The firſt Poeſy was certainly the Praiſe of God and Thankſgiving of Man for the natural Benefits beſtowed on him by Heaven; and this was ſung for the greater Solemnity to Muſic, and certain Geſticulations of the Body, which produc'd what was afterwards call'd Dancing; as is plain in the before quoted Chapter of *Exodus*, Verſe 20. *And* Miriam *the Propheteſs the Siſter of* Aaron *took a Timbrel in her Hand, and all the Women went out after her with Timbrels and with Dances.* 2. *And* Miriam *anſwer'd them, ſing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumph'd glorioufly; the Horſe and his Rider hath he throwun into the Sea.*

In this Song of *Moſes* and *Miriam*, we may diſcover all thoſe different Parts of the Lyric, the Invention of which is attributed among the *Greeks* to ſeveral Poets, as to *Orpheus*, *Steſichorus*, *Alcman*, &c. except the amorous Part, which is given to *Anacreon*.

But here is in this of *Moſes*, a Grandeur and Sublime above all the *Greek* Poets; for as the Object, and the Subject are vaſtly ſuperiour to the latter, ſo is the Performance.

The *Greeks* (at leaſt *Plutarch*) attribute the Invention of the Hymn to *Steſichorus*, the Chorea to *Alcman* of *Lacedemon*, the Love Songs to *Anacreon*, and the Odes with Dancing to *Pindar* of *Thebes*; thoſe which were diſtinguiſh'd by the Name of *Nomos*, *Timotheus* of *Miletus* was the firſt who ſung them in the Chorus to the *Lute* or *Cithara*. But in my Opinion, theſe Poets here mention'd were rather the firſt who were eminent in each Kind, and not the Inventors of it.

This is all I can find that relates to the Invention of the *Lyric* Poeſy, in which the moſt Famous are reduc'd to a very ſmall Number, that is, to ten Men and two Ladies, who among the *Greeks* are call'd the Princes of the *Lyric Muſe*: *Steſichorus*, *Bacchylides*, *Ibycus*, *Anacreon*, *Pindar*, *Simonides*, *Alcman*, *Alcæus*, *Sappho*, and *Corinna*. Others have celebrated ſeven Ladies more for this Sort of Poetry, as *Erinna*, *Myro*, *Teleſilla*, *Praxilla*, *Noſſis*, *Anyte* and *Myrtis*.

Theſe Ladies were born in ſeveral Parts of *Greece*. *Sappho* is known to every one to have been of *Lesbos*: *Erinna* is by moſt reckon'd of the ſame Country, tho' ſome place her Birth in *Tinos* a City of *Lacedemon*: *Myro* was either of *Rhodes* or *Byzantium*, and was the Mother of a very great Tragic Poet of that City, call'd *Homer* of *Byzantium*, who flouriſh'd with ſeveral other great Poets in that Kind, much about the Time of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, a Prince who was one of the greateſt Patrons of Poetry, and all Learning that ever was known. *Teleſilla* was of *Argos*; the Country of

Prax-

Praxilla was *Sicyon*, there remains but one Epigram of *Nossis*, but fourteen of *Anyte*; MYRTIS was of *Anthedon*; but what is her greateſt Honour, is, that ſhe had the Great *Pindar* for her Scholar. For then the Poets ſet not up for Writing, before they had learn'd and ſtudy'd the Rules of Art.

As many of the *Greeks*, as excell'd in, and rais'd their Fame by this Poem both Male and Female, among the *Romans*, *Horace* ſeems much beyond a Rival, and almoſt alone. But tho' *Horace* muſt be allow'd the Sovereignty in the *Latin Lyrics*, yet there were many others who have merited ſome Praiſe; as *Titius* extoll'd by *Horace* himſelf on this Account; *Cæſius Baſſus*, *Veſtilius Spurinna*, *Septimius Afer*, *Alfricus Avitus*. All theſe from the Time of *Claudius* and *Nero* to that of the Emperor *Alexander Severus*. Perhaps *Catullus* himſelf may be admitted, ſince he has left us ſome Performances in this kind.

I hope this ſhort Hiſtorical Account of the Poem and its moſt eminent Authors has not been tedious to you, or ſo alien to the preſent Enquiry as to have led you quite from the Subject, which is the Art of Compoſing Lyric Verſes or Poems properly adapted to Muſic, Vocal and Inſtrumental. And this difference is much more plain in *Engliſh*, where Songs alone are ſung; whereas every ſort of Verſe in *Greek* had its Tune and proper Inſtrument; for the *Ilias* and *Odyſſes* of *Homer* were ſung about *Greece* by the *Rhapſodiſts*; but I am apt to believe it was in a ſort of beautiful *Recitativo*.

His Grace of *Buckinghamſhire*, in his admirable Eſſay, has divided his Precepts relating to Songs from thoſe of *Odes*, as if of a different Kind, interpoſing his Remarks on the Elegy between them. I preſume the Reaſon is, becauſe the weak Performances of this ſort in our Language, ſeem unworthy a Place in the Rank of the Wonders of *Pindar*, *Horace*, and the reſt; yet when improv'd by his Grace's admirable Precepts, I preſume

they will be admitted without difficulty into the leſſer Or
I ſhall therefore begin with his Grace's Rules for *Songs*.

Firſt then of SONGS, *which now ſo much abound,*
Without his Song *no Fop is to be found.*
A moſt offenſive Weapon, which he draws
On all he meets, againſt Apollo's *Laws.*
Though nothing ſeems more eaſy, yet no Part
Of Poetry requires a nicer Art;
For as in Rows of richeſt Pearl there lies
Many a Blemiſh, that eſcapes our Eyes,
The leaſt of which Defects is plainly ſhown
In ſome ſmall Ring, and brings the Value down.
So Songs ſhou'd be to juſt Perfection wrought,
Yet where can we ſee one without a Fault?
Exact Propriety of Words and Thought:
Expreſſion eaſy, and the Fancy high,
Yet that, not ſeem to creep, nor this, to fly:
No Words tranſpos'd, but in ſuch Order all,
As tho', hard wrought, may ſeem by chance to fall.
Here, as in all Things elſe, is moſt unfit
Bare Ribaldry, that poor Pretence to Wit.
Such nauſeous Songs, *by a late Author made,*
Call an unwilling Cenſure on his Shade.
Not that warm Thoughts of the tranſporting Joy
Can ſhock the chaſteſt, or the niceſt cloy.
But Words obſcene, too groſs to move Deſire,
Like Heaps of Fewel, do but choak the Fire.
On other Themes he well deſerves our Praiſe,
Here, palls that Appetite *he meant to raiſe.*

Theſe Precepts are ſo plain, ſo evident and ſo juſt, that they need no Explanation, or Proof. I ſhall only add, the Subject of moſt of our SONGS are either relating to *Love* or Drinking; and it is remarkable that the *French*, who are a much ſoberer People in the general, yet have produc'd better *Songs* on Drinking than we have done.

What

What we have of *Sappho*, and the Odes of *Anacreon*, e of the Leſſer *Ode*; *Pindar*, *Alcæus*, *Alcman*, *Steſi-orus*, of the *greater*; thoſe of *Horace*, of *both*.

I now come to the greater *Ode*, and ſhall begin my recepts or Rules from the ſame great *Engliſh* Nobleman his *Eſſay on Poetry*.

A higher Flight, and of a happier Force
Are * ODES, *the Muſes moſt unruly Horſe,* *Pindaric
That bounds ſo fierce, the Rider has no Reſt, Odes.
But foams at Mouth, and moves like one poſſeſt.
The Poet here muſt be indeed inſpir'd;
With Fury too, as well as Fancy fir'd.
Cowley *might boaſt to have perform'd this Part,*
Had he with Nature join'd the Rules of Art;
But ill Expreſſion ſometimes gives Allay
To that rich Fancy, which can ne'er decay.
Tho' all appear in Heat, and Fury done,
The Language ſtill muſt ſoft and eaſy run.
Theſe Laws may ſeem a little too ſevere;
But Judgment *yields, and* Fancy *governs there.*
Which, tho' extravagant, this Muſe allows,
And makes the Work much eaſier, than it ſhows.

Before I come to make my Remarks on theſe Verſes my Lord Duke, I ſhall add what the great *Boileau* ys on the ſame Subject in *his Art of Poetry*.

But the bold Ode *demands a ſtronger Turn,*
For there the Muſe muſt with all Phœbus *burn;*
Mounting to Heav'n in her ambitious Flight,
Amongſt the Gods, *and* Heroes *takes Delight;*
Of Piſa's *Wreſtlers tells the ſinewy Force,*
And ſings the duſty Conqu'ror's *glorious Courſe;*
On Danube's *Banks victorious* Marlbro' *ſeen,*
And Spaniſh Iber *bows to* Britain's *Queen.*
Sometimes ſhe flies like an induſtrious Bee,
And robs the Flow'rs by Nature's Chymiſtry;

Deſcribes the Shepherds Dances, Feaſts and Bliſs,
And boaſts from PHILLIS *to ſurprize a Kiſs.*
When gently ſhe reſiſts with feign'd Remorſe,
That what ſhe grants may ſeem to be by Force:
Her generous Stile will oft at random ſtart,
And by a brave diſorder ſhow her Art.
Unlike thoſe fearful Poets, whoſe cold Rhime,
In all their Raptures, keeps exacteſt Time:
Who ſing th' illuſtrious Hero's mighty Praiſe,
(Lean Noveliſts) by Terms of Weeks and Days;
Who for a Poem do a Journal ſhow,
And tell their Tale like Holinſhead *or* Stow;
Who trace their Hero thro' a whole Campaign,
And mark each Circumſtance on Blenheim *Plain.*
To theſe APOLLO, *niggard of his Fire,*
Denies a Place in the Pierian *Choir.*

The humorous God once took it in his head
To plague the ſcribbling Tribe, as ſome have ſaid;
And that he might their lab'ring Brains confound,
For the ſhort Sonnet order'd a ſtrict Bound;
Set Rules for the juſt Meaſure and the Time,
The eaſy Running and alternate Rhime.
But, above all, thoſe Licences deny'd,
Which in their Writings the lame Senſe ſupply'd;
Forbad a uſeleſs Line ſhou'd find a Place,
Or a repeated Word appear with Grace.
A faultleſs Sonnet, finiſh'd thus, would be
Worth tedious Volumes of looſe Poetry.
An hundred Scribbling Authors, without Ground,
Believe they have this only Phœnix found,
When yet th' exacteſt ſcarce have two or three,
(Among whole Tomes) from Faults and Cenſure free.
The reſt, but little read, regarded leſs,
Are ſhovel'd to the Paſtry from the Preſs.
Cloſing the Senſe within the meaſur'd Time,
'Tis hard to fit the Reaſon to the Rhime.

To theſe two Modern Maſters, I ſhall add *Horace* among the Antients, who was himſelf the greateſt Lyric Poet of the *Latins*.

Gods, Heroes, Conquerors, Olympic *Crowns,*
LOVES *pleaſing Cares, and the free Joys of Wine,*
Are proper Subjects for the Lyric *Song.*
ROSCOM. HOR.

As for the *Eſſay* on which I promis'd my Remarks, they are very ſhort, and confin'd to two or three Lines.

Theſe Laws may ſeem a little too ſevere:
But Judgment *yields, and* Fancy *governs here;*
Which, tho' extravagant, this Muſe allows,
And makes the Work much eaſier than it ſhows.

It is my Opinion that we are not here to take his Grace in a cloſe and literal Senſe; for it is certain, that though Fancy is very ſtrong in this Poem, yet that Judgment ought here as well as in other Poems to govern. For if we conſult *Pindar*, we ſhall find that in the midſt of the Rapidity of his Fancy Judgment ſtill holds the Reins; and when he rambles, and when he returns from his beautiful Digreſſions, Judgment every where conducts him. So that I am afraid the Work is not ſo eaſy, as ſome, who miſtake his Grace's Meaning, may imagine.

I might here add ſomething on the *Hebrew Lyric*, I mean the Songs of *Moſes*, *Deborah*, &c. the Pſalms, and ſome of the Prophets, if not all; but that would be a Diſquiſition which would take up too much Time; let it ſuffice that a learned *Frenchman* has diſcover'd the Verſe of the *Hebrew* Poetry, which he aſſures us is cloſ'd with a ſort of Rhimes, ſo that by this means we find Rhime of an antienter Uſage than either the Provencial Poets, or the Runnic. There is nothing ſo ſoft, ſo tender and pathetic, and at the ſame time nothing

ſo grand, ſo majeſtic, ſo terrible, and ſo harmonious, as the Poetic Part of the Bible, to which all the Heathen Verſe is flat and low. And there can be no greater Proof of the Excellence of the former above the latter, than that the Force and Vigour of the Original ſhines extremely bright through all its Tranſlations, whereas the beſt Hands have found it difficult enough to make *Horace*, *Virgil*, *Homer*, *Sophocles*, and the reſt, appear with any Proportion of Beauty in any Verſion.

To recapitulate in ſhort, the *Lyric* is diſtinguiſh'd by its *Sweetneſs* and variety of Verſe, nor is that exquiſite Elegance of the Words to be ſlighted by our *Engliſh* Bard, for which it is ſo eminent in the *Latin* and *Greek*. For as the Diction of the *Ode* ſhould be elegantly ſweet, ſo an ill or low Expreſſion clogs and debaſes the Brightneſs of the Thought.

The *Pindaric Ode* in its Original is diſtinguiſh'd from all other *Odes* by the happy Tranſitions and Digreſſions, with which it gains a new Beauty, as well as the ſurprizing, eaſy, and natural Returns to the Subject, which Graces are not to be attain'd without great Judgment and *Genius*.

Tho' our ignorant Imitators of *Pindar* have run into a ſtrange inequality and irregularity of Verſe, yet it is without Authority from *Pindar*, whoſe Odes are perpetually divided by a regular Order, as you may find by Mr. *Congreve*'s Preface to his *Ode*.

Cowley may well be conſulted by our *Engliſh* Reader, for he has excell'd himſelf in his Tranſlations of that great *Theban*; 'tis true, that Mr. *Cowley* (as his Grace in the fore quoted Verſes ſhews) had not always the Happineſs of flowing Numbers, for that is a Faculty, that in his Time was not come to Perfection, which now is attain'd often by very vile Scribblers.

We draw now towards a Concluſion of my Task, which I ſhall end with ſome Account of *Satire*. I ſhall begin with the Opinion of a Modern Author.

For-

Folly and Vice of ev'ry ſort and kind,
That wound our Reaſon, or debaſe our Mind,
All that deſerves our Laughter or our Hate
To biting Satires Province does relate;
The ſlothful Paraſite, affected Fool,
Th' ingrateful, and the pert loquacious Tool;
The luſtful Drunkard, th' Avaricious Slave,
The noiſy Bravo, and the tricking Knave,
Satire by wholeſome Leſſons won'd reclaim,
And heal their Vices, to ſecure their Fame.

And a little after ——

No Parts diſtinct does biting Satire know,
And without certain Rules its courſe will go:
Oft by Inſinuation it begins,
And oft abruptly falls upon our Sins.
But this Abruptneſs ſhou'd regard the whole,
Which muſt its Words, and Manner too controul.

I quote not theſe Lines for the ſake of the fine Dictions or Numbers, defective in both, which I am willing to allow them, but for the eaſy Plainneſs and Fulneſs of the Precepts, which is here my Buſineſs.

But I ſhall not be ſatisfy'd with theſe alone; I ſhall offer to you the Sentiments of BOILEAU, and his preſent Grace of *Buckinghamſhire*: And thus the *French* great Poet and Critic.

Deſire to ſhow itſelf, and not to wrong,
At firſt arm'd Truth with Satire in its Tongue.
Lucillius *led the way, and bravely bold,*
To Roman *Vices did the Mirror hold;*
Protected humble Goodneſs from Reproach,
Show'd Worth on foot, and Raſcals in the Coach:
HORACE *his pleaſing Wit to this did add,*
And none, uncenſur'd, cou'd be Fool or Mad;

Un-

Unhappy was that Wretch, whoſe Name cou'd be
Squar'd to the Rules of their ſharp Poetry.
PERSIUS, *obſcure, but full of Senſe and Wit,*
Affected Brevity in all he writ:
And Juvenal, *with Rhetorician's Rage,*
Scourg'd the rank Vices of a wicked Age.
Tho' horrid Truths through all his Labours ſhine,
In what he writes, there's ſomething of Divine:
Whether he blames the Caprean *Debauch,*
Or of Sejanus' *Fall foretells th' Approach;*
Or that he makes the trembling Senate come
To the ſtern Tyrant, to receive their Doom;
Or Roman *Vice in coarſeſt Habits ſhews,*
And paints an Empreſs reeking from the Stews;
In all he writes appears a noble Flame:
To imitate ſuch Maſters be your Aim.
Chaucer *alone, fix'd on this ſolid Baſe*
In his old Stile, preſerves a Modern Grace:
Too happy, if the Freedom of his Rhimes
Offended not the Cuſtom of our Times.
The Latin *Writers, Decency neglect;*
But Engliſh *Readers challenge our Reſpect;*
And at immodeſt Writings take offence,
If clean Expreſſion cover not the Senſe.
I love ſharp Satire, from Obſceneneſs free;
Not Impudence that preaches Modeſty:
Our Engliſh, *who in Malice never fail,*
Hence, in Lampoons and Libels, learnt to rail;
Pleaſant Detraction, that by Singing goes
From Mouth to Mouth, and as it marches grows!
Our Freedom in our Poetry we ſee,
That Child of Joy, begot by Liberty.
But, vain Blaſphemer, tremble, when you chuſe
God for the Subject of your Impious Muſe:
At laſt, thoſe Jeſts which Libertines invent,
Bring the lewd Author to juſt Puniſhment.

I have given you *Boileau* in the beſt Dreſs in which he has been deliver'd to us, and in which he has been made to ſpeak like an *Engliſhman*; yet ſtill keeping to his Precepts in general, which makes him the more uſeful to us. Here we have not only the Rules of Satire, but an Abſtract of its Hiſtory and Riſe; for indeed *Satire* is a Poem of *Roman* Invention, and unknown to the *Greeks*; its Name it derives from a Plate or Server full of various Fruits, and it ought to be written with an (I) and not a (Y): And as *Boileau* obſerves, *Lucillius* was the firſt who writ in this kind. But the *Romans* had two ſorts of *Satires*, that of *Ennius* and *Varro*, and that of *Lucillius*, *Horace*, *Perſius*, and *Juvenal*. What the latter is we have been treating of, the former was a mixture of Proſe and Verſe on various Subjects, and not confin'd to Biting.

Of this kind is *Petronius Arbiter*, *Barclays*, *Euphormio* and ſome others: But to return to our Subject, I ſhall conclude it with the fine Remarks of the *Eſſay on Poetry*.

I find (ſaid *Manilia*) Quality has a great Aſcendant over your Opinion; for we have had nothing yet concluded, ſince we came into the Matter which that Poem treats of, without its Authority.

Indeed, fair *Manilia* (ſaid I) you are infinitely miſtaken in your Man; for I am one who pay the leaſt Deference to Quality, in Matters of Arts and Learning, of any Man alive. But ſure all Men muſt acquit me of any ſuch ſervile Inclination (if they were ignorant of my natural Temper) in my ſpeaking with Deference to the Lord *Roſcommon*, and the *Eſſay* you mention. I ſhall defer a fuller anſwer to your Imputation, till I conclude this Diſcourſe, to an end of which I am very near approaching. And therefore to the *Eſſay*.

Of all the Ways, that wiſeſt Men could find,
To mend the Age, and mortify Mankind;

Satire

Satire well writ has moſt ſucceſsful prov'd,
And cures, becauſe the Remedy *is lov'd.*
'Tis hard to write on ſuch a Subject more,
Without repeating Things ſaid oft before.
Some vulgar Errors only we remove,
That ſtain a Beauty which ſo much we love.
Of well-choſe Words ſome take not Care enough,
And think they ſhould be, as the Subject, rough.
This Poem muſt be more exactly made,
And ſharpeſt Thoughts in ſmootheſt Words convey'd.
Some think, if ſharp enough, they cannot fail,
As if their only Buſ'neſs was to rail:
But humane Frailty nicely to unfold,
Diſtinguiſhes a Satire *from a Scold.*
Rage you muſt hide, and Prejudice lay down;
A Satire's Smile is ſharper than his Frown:
So, while you ſeem to ſlight ſome Rival Youth,
Malice itſelf may ſometimes paſs for Truth.

I ſhall ſay no more of this Poem, having I think given you ſufficient Rules not only of judging of its Excellence, but of performing it with the Applauſe of all true Judges, and that in a plain familiar Manner, (as in all the Poets I have touch'd upon) without the Incumbrance of Scholaſtic Terms, which are not ſo obvious to thoſe who are not acquainted with the original Critics.

Now, fair *Manilia*, I ſhall a little more fully anſwer what you ſaid about the Deference I paid to the laſt quoted Noble Author.

I am a Perſon, who never have, I thank my Stars, deſerv'd or found the Favour of the Great Men, the Men of Power and Wealth. That I leave to the *Labeo*'s, the *Fannius*'s, and *Criſpinus*'s, who have never fail'd of their Favour. Theſe are Men qualify'd for it, and can pay a ſervile Attendance, and flatter their Vanity, who think that a great Title can give Underſtanding to the Knowledge and Taſte of the finer Arts. When *Crites*, the moſt conſummate

nmate Critic of the Age, and at the ſame time a Po- of the firſt Magnitude, purpos'd the Publiſhing a mplete Body of Criticiſm in Poetry, he got not ove ſeventy Guineas Subſcription: When *Labeo* pro- s'd a Subſcription for an abominable Tranſlation, he t above 3000 *l.* ſubſcrib'd. In my Time, who you ow am no Young Man, I knew a Nobleman who rew away a matter of 1500 *l.* a Year on worthleſs Fid- s, and the like, who yet had taken a Reſolution of en- uraging no Poet who ask'd not his leave to mention Name, how improper and ridiculous ſoever that ght be to the Subject; this very Nobleman was not averſe to Rhime, but that he ſubſcrib'd forty Guineas a moſt worthleſs Poem.

In ſhort, I know the Taſte and Humour of our great en too well, to place the leaſt Hope in their Favour.

I remember an Account a Nobleman of Parts gave me ore than once of a Converſation between King *James* and *Iſaac Voſſius* a Prebendary of *Windſor*, who ith all the reſt of his Fraternity came to welcome that ing to the Caſtle. How comes it, ſaid the King, that e *Greeks* and the *Romans* had better Poets, Orators, d Hiſtorians than we have? And it pleaſe your Majeſ- , return'd the Prebendary, with an honeſt Bluntneſs, *reece* and *Rome* were *Common-wealths*, but Monarchy ver encourage thoſe fine Arts. The King, ſaid the obleman, turn'd ſhort upon him and made him no An- ver, tacitly owning the Accuſation; but I could have ld that Nobleman, that it was not the Fault of the onarchs, but their Miniſters, who did not recommend oſe Arts and their Maſters. We find every day Foot- en and Valets des Chambres, *&c.* find ſo much Favour ith their Lords and Maſters, as by their Intereſt to get to Poſts of ſuch Profit as ſhall ſoon ſet them up for entlemen, and make them rich Men too; but give me ne Inſtance of any of their doing ſuch Favours for the ons of the Muſes, and then I will allow that Addreſſes to em, and their Praiſe, may not be look'd on as Flattery.

Otway

Otway died in an Alehouſe, *Lee* in the Streets, B
ler and *Spenſer* ſtarv'd; *Milton* never got a Penny fr
any one of them, tho' fawning Poetaſters have fou
their Account in their Addreſſes.

Since you find I know this, I hope you will n
think what I have ſaid proceeds from any thing b
my impartial Judgment; for I promiſe you I ſhall nev
make any Application ev'n to this Nobleman, who h
deſerv'd ſo well from the Art of Poetry, tho' I have t
Honour to be known to him, and have had the Favo
of peruſing a Performance of his much ſuperior to t
Eſſay, as being of a higher and more noble kin
This I hope is enough to remove your Suſpicion, th
what I have ſaid of the *Eſſay* is not the Effect of m
Judgment, but Complaiſance for his great Quality.

Here my Friend *Crites* ended this day's Converſatio
what follow'd, I ſhall give you in my next.

The End of the third Dialogue.

THE Art of POETRY.

DIALOGUE IV.

of TRAGEDY *and* COMEDY, *how to draw the Plot and form the Characters, &c. of both.*

HAVING in the laſt Dialogue given you an Account (judicious CRITES) of what was deliver'd on the Rules of ſo many Parts of *Poetry* from the EPIGRAM to the *Drama*; I now come to Task, much more agreeable to my *Taſte*, the Rules which our Play-Writers, whether of Tragedy or Comedy, ought to direct themſelves in their Performances of that kind. Tho' the promiſcuous Mob of *Scribblers* have frequently invaded all the foregoing Parts, and daily peſter us with their Productions in ſome one of them, without the Helps of either Art or Nature; yet for my own part, I cou'd willingly compound with them, if they would be ſatisfied with *Epigram*, *Paſtoral*, *Satire*, and *Songs*, and not preſume to attempt the greater and moſt valuable Province of Poeſy, the *Drama*. But alas! while ſuch have the Direction of the Stage,

Stage, who are entirely ignorant of the Divine A
and by Conſequence admit, nay and often cry up
worſt Efforts that way, it is in vain to expect tha
Poetaſters will forbear thruſting their wonderful Scr
TIONS upon us, ſince they derive the Advantage o
third Day from their Inſolence. To diſcourage fu
and inſpire thoſe to whom Nature has given a *Genius*
publiſh theſe Rules, which if the Managers of the Ho
cou'd underſtand, and would ſtudy, we might hope
ſee a glorious Stage.

We were no ſooner met this Day, and ſet, but M
NILIA with a ſmiling Countenance thus begun.

I hope now I ſhall pleaſe you when I bring the Sp
tator to juſtify your Opinion of *Tragedy*; for how e
roneus ſoever you will have him in other Things,
this I am confident you will allow his Juſtice.

As a perfect Tragedy (ſays he Num. 39.) *is the* nob
Production *of Humane Nature, ſo it is capable of*
ving the Mind one of the moſt delightful and improv
Entertainments. A virtuous Man (ſays Seneca) *ſtru*
ling with Misfortunes, is ſuch a Spectacle, as G
might look upon with Pleaſure. And ſuch a Pleaſu
is which one meets with in the Repreſentation of a
written Tragedy. *Diverſions of this kind* [illegible]
our Thoughts every Thing, that is mean *and*
They cheriſh and cultivate that Humanity, which is
Ornament of our Nature. They ſoften Inſolence, ſo
Affliction, and ſubdue the Mind to the Diſpenſations
Providence.

It is no wonder therefore that in all polite Nations
the World, this Part of the Drama *has met with pu*
Encouragement.

The modern Tragedy excels that of Greece *and* Ro
in the Intricacy and Diſpoſition of the Fable; *but what*
Chriſtian Writer ſhou'd be aſham'd to own, falls infini
ly ſhort of it in the Moral Part of the Performance.

I am the SPECTATOR's moſt humble Servant (ſi
LAUDON) for acknowledging a Truth once in
Reig

ign, which all the World agrees in; and yet upon wing the Contexture, I am afraid that this worthy thor is not perfectly appriz'd of what a perfect *Tra-*y is. Nor ſhou'd I much wonder at it, ſince he had corrupted his Taſte by the Approbation of *Opera's*, t he might very well be to ſeek in the Nature of *Tragedy*, a Poem, which is in reality the nobleſt and ſt uſeful Production of Humane Nature. My Reaſon this Opinion, is, his Quotation from *Seneca*, that *virtuous Man, ſtrugling with Misfortunes, is ſuch a ctacle, as Gods might look on with Pleaſure*; for he ds, *and ſuch a Pleaſure one meets with in the Repre-tation of a well written* Tragedy.

'Tis true that a virtuous Man may be introduc'd into well written *Tragedy* ſtrugling with Misfortunes; but n this virtuous Man muſt be victorious over thoſe ſfortunes before, or in the Concluſion of the *Drama*: t firſt, this is not the moſt perfect ſort of *Tragedy*, her in its Uſe or Pleaſure, ſince a *Tragedy* with an fortunate Cataſtrophe is more delightful and more in-uctive; for, firſt, it is more full of the Paſſions whoſe otion cauſes Pleaſure; and then it ſtrikes us with the niſhment of the Hero neither ſovereignly good, nor bſtigately evil, for not checking his Paſſions in their ſe, but yielding to their Impulſe, till they had hurried n to Miſchiefs he might otherwiſe have eſcap'd.)

But next, I am afraid the SPECTATOR aims not en at the firſt of theſe; he is for ſeeing a Man ſove-ignly virtuous, miſerable, and periſhing in his Miſeries, d this he ſuppoſes will give an improving Pleaſure. ut how he will make that out I confeſs I cannot diſ-ver; nor has he any where endeavoured to do it. muſt certainly create Horrour, Diſdain, and all the inful and diſguſtful Paſſions, without any manner of provement.

Diverſions of this kind (ſays he) *wear out of our houghts every Thing that is* mean *and* little; *they che-h and cultivate that Humanity which is the Orna-*

ment

ment of our Nature. They ſoften Inſolence, ſoothe Affliction, and ſubdue the Mind to the Diſpenſations of Providence.

That perfect *Tragedy* does this, and has great and wonderful Effects on the Soul, I ſhall always allow; but that ſuch as he calls perfect *Tragedy* can have any one of theſe Effects, I utterly deny.

But you ſeem (interrupted MANILIA) to force Conſtruction on his Words, which they will not literally bear. It is true, he does not ſeem to have expreſs'd himſelf with that Clearneſs on this Subject which he ought; but we ſhould ever have ſo much Candour, as to allow the moſt favourable Conſtructions, at leaſt, to a Perſon of ſuch a Figure, as the Spectator has made.

Madam (aſſum'd LAUDON) I perfectly allow what you ſay, and ſhou'd never have preſs'd ſo cloſe on the Words of this SPECTATOR, did not the very next explain it. To make out therefore my Charge, you ſhall hear SPECTATOR, Num. 40, and then you will be more favourable in your Opinion of my Cenſure of this Author. I ſhall only obſerve here *en paſſant*, that he is entirely out in his next Poſition, that the *Moderns* excel the Antients in the Intricacy and Diſpoſition of the *Fable.*

What we have to deliver of *Tragedy* will hereafter make this out. And ſo now to SPECTATOR, Num. 4. *The* Engliſh *Writers of* Tragedy *are poſſeſs'd with a Notion, that when they repreſent a virtuous or innocent Perſon in diſtreſs, they ought not to leave him till they have deliver'd him out of his Troubles, or made him triumph over his Enemies. This Error they have been led into by a ridiculous Doctrine in* Modern *Criticiſm, that they are oblig'd to an equal Diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments, and an impartial Execution of* Poetical Juſtice. *Who were the firſt that eſtabliſhed this Rule I know not: But I am ſure it has no Foundation in* Nature, *in* Reaſon, *or in the* Practice of the Antients. *We find, that Good and Evil happen to all Men on this ſide*

Grave: And as the principal Deſign of Tragedy, *is raiſe* Commiſeration *and* Terror *in the Minds of the udience, we ſhall defeat this great End, if we always ake* Virtue *and* Innocence *happy and ſucceſsful. Whatr Croſſes or Diſappointments a* good Man *ſuffers in Body of* Tragedy, *they will make but ſmall impreſſion our Minds, when we know, that in the laſt Act he is arrive at the end of his Wiſhes and Deſires. When we him engag'd in the depth of his Afflictions, we are t to comfort ourſelves, becauſe we are ſure he will find Way out of them, and that his Grief, how great ſoever may be at preſent, will then terminate in Gladneſs. For is Reaſon the antient Writers of* Tragedy *treated them their Plays, as they are dealt in the World, by maing Virtue ſometimes happy, and ſometimes miſerable, they find it in the Fable, which they made choice of, as it might affect their Audience in the moſt agreeable anner:* Ariſtotle *conſiders the Tragedies that were ritten in either of theſe Kinds, and obſerves that thoſe hich ended unhappily had always pleaſed the People, d carried away the Prize in the public Diſputes of the age, from thoſe that ended* happily.

He after this allows a great many good *Tragedies* ritten on the other Plan, and concludes that—*he does t diſpute againſt this way of writing* Tragedies, *but ainſt the* Criticiſm *that would eſtabliſh this as the* only *ethod, and by that means would very much cramp the* nglish Tragedy, *and give a wrong bent to the Genius our Writers.*

From this I think it is very plain, that the former *ectator* had the ſame View in his doubtful Expreſſion, d by Conſequence it is evident, that I have not forc'd Meaning upon him, which his Words wou'd not bare. How entirely falſe all this *Criticiſm* is (if we may alw it that Name) will be ſeen by what Mr. DENNIS s judiciouſly reply'd to it in his Letter to the *Spectator*, bliſh'd with his *Eſſay on the Genius and Writings of* akeſpear. I ſhall only obſerve one thing by the way from

from the Play of *Cato*, in the first Scene and first
where *Marcus* says to his Brother:

By Heav'n, such Virtues, join'd with such Succes
Distract my very Soul: Our Father's Fortune
Wou'd almost tempt us to renounce his Precepts.

From whence it is plain, that the Author thought
fering Virtue produc'd Indignation and Horror, and
Pity and *Fear.*

And this is confirm'd by the same Author in his
marks upon *Milton* in the SPECTATORS, where he
sures us, that a Person of a consummate Virtue (tha
one that entirely commands his Passion,) shou'd ne
be introduc'd into *Tragedy*, because as *Aristotle*
(they are the Words of the Author of *Cato*) his Sut
ings do not raise *Pity* and *Terror.*

But this only *en passant*, as being the Judgment o
Friend of Importance; now let us hear what
DENNIS offers in Answer to what is here advanc
"*To set a few of his Errors in their proper Light*, he t
"us in the beginning of that Paper, *that the* Eng
"*Writers of Tragedy were possess'd with a Notion,*
"*when they represent a virtuous or innocent Perso*
"*Distress, they ought not to leave him till they have*
"*liver'd him out of his Trouble, and made him*
"*umph over his Enemies.*

"But Mr. *Spectator* (pursues Mr. DENNIS) is t
"peculiar to the *English* Writers of Tragedy, have n
"the *French* Writers of Tragedy the same Notio
"Does not RACINE tell us in the Preface to his *Ip*
"*genia*, that it would have been horrible to have
"filed the Stage with the Murder of a Princess so v
"tuous and lovely as was *Iphigenia*? But your Cor
"spondent goes on — *This Error* (says he) *they ha*
"*been led into by a ridiculous Doctrine in* Modern C
"ticism, *that they are oblig'd to an equal Distribution*

"R

Rewards and Punishments, and an impartial Execution of Poetical Justice.

Mr. DENNIS then shews that this Modern Criticism is establish'd by ARISTOTLE 2000 Years ago, who tells us expresly in the 13*th* Chap. of his Poetic's, *That since a Tragedy to have all the Beauties of which it is capable, ought to be* implex, *and not* simple, *and ought to move Compassion and Terror, for we have already shown, that the exciting those Passions is the proper Effect of a Tragical Imitation, it follows* necessarily, *that we must not choose a very good Man, to plunge him from a prosperous Condition into Adversity; for instead of moving Compassion and Terror, that on the contrary wou'd create Horror, and be detested by all the World.*

"And does not the same deluded Philosopher (pursues Mr. DENNIS) tell us in the very same Chapter, that the *Fable* to which he gives the second Preference, is that which has a double Constitution, and which ends by a double Catastrophe, a Catastrophe favourable to the good, and fatal to the wicked. Is not here a very formal Recommendation of the impartial and exact Execution of Poetical Justice? Thus *Aristotle* was the first who establish'd this ridiculous Doctrine of *Modern Criticism*.

"But he goes on in his Dictatorian Way — *This Rule* (says he) *whoever establish'd it, has I am sure no Foundation in Nature, in Reason, and in the Practices of the Antients.*" But what will this dogmatic Person say now, when we show him that this contemptible Doctrine of Poetical Justice, is not only founded in *Reason* and *Nature*; but is itself the Foundation of all the Rules, and even of Tragedy itself? For what *Tragedy* can there be without a *Fable*? And what Fable without a *Moral*? Or what *Moral* without *Poetical Justice*? What *Moral* where the Good and the Bad are confounded by Destiny, and perish alike promiscuously? Thus we see this Doctrine of

" *Poetical Juſtice*, is more founded on Reaſon and Na
" ture, than all the reſt of the Poetical Rules in gene
" ral. For what can be more natural and more highly
" reaſonable to employ that Rule in *Tragedy*, without
" which that Poem cannot exiſt? Well, but the Prac
" tice of the *Antients* is againſt this *Poetical Juſtice*.
" What always, Mr. *Spectator!* Will your Correſpon
" dent have the Aſſurance to affirm that? No, but
" ſometimes: Why then ſometimes the *Antients* offend
" againſt Reaſon and Nature. And whoever believes
" that the Antients were without Fault, or brought
" *Tragedy* to its Perfection? But I ſhall take another
" Opportunity to ſhow, that the Practice of the *Anti*
" *ents*, in all their *Maſter-Pieces*, is exactly according to
" this fundamental Rule. I have not Time to do that
" in this ſhort Letter, becauſe that wou'd neceſſarily
" oblige me to ſhow, that *Poetical Juſtice* is of a much
" larger Extent, than this profound Critic imagines;
" but yet I ſhall give the diſcerning Reader a Hint of
" it in that which follows.

" *Poetical Juſtice*, ſays your Correſpondent, *has no*
" *Foundation in Nature and Reaſon, becauſe we ſee*
" *that* Good *and* Evil *happen alike to all Men on this*
" *ſide the Grave.* In Anſwer to this he muſt give me
" leave to tell him, that this is not only a very falſe
" but a very dangerous Aſſertion; that we neither know
" what *really* Men are, nor what they *really* ſuffer.

" 'Tis not always that we know Men's Crimes, but
" how ſeldom do we know their Paſſions, and eſpe
" cially their darling Paſſions? And as *Paſſion* is the oc
" caſion of infinitely more Diſorders in the World than
" Malice, (for where one Man falls a Sacrifice to in
" veterate Malice, a thouſand become Victims to Re
" venge and Ambition; and whereas Malice has ſome
" thing, that ſhocks Humane Nature, Paſſion is plea
" ſingly catching and contagious,) can any thing be
" more juſt, than that Providence, which governs the
" World, ſhou'd puniſh Men for indulging their Paſ

" ſion

" sions, as much as for obeying the Dictates of their
" most invenom'd Hatred and Malice.
" Thus you see, that for all that we know, Good and
" Evil does not happen alike to all Men on this side
" the Grave. Because it is for the most part by their
" Passions that Men offend, and 'tis by their *Passions* for
" the most part, that they are punish'd. But this is
" certain, that the more Virtue a Man has, the more he
" commands his Passions; but the Virtuous alone com-
" mand them. The Wicked take the utmost care to
" dissemble and conceal them; for which Reason we
" neither know what our Neighbours are, nor what
" they really suffer. Man is too finite, too shallow,
" and too empty a Creature to know another Man
" throughly, to know the Creature of an infinite Crea-
" tor; but Dramatical Persons are Creatures, of which
" a Poet is himself the Creator. And tho' a Mortal is
" not able to know the Almighty's Creatures, he may be
" allow'd to know his own; to know the utmost Extent
" of their Guilt, and what they ought to suffer; nay, he
" must be allow'd not only to know this himself, but to
" make it manifest and unquestionable to all his Readers
" and Hearers. The Creatures of a Poetical Creator have
" no Dissimulations, and no Reserve; we see their Pas-
" sions in all their Height, and in all their Deformity,
" and when they are unfortunate, we are never to seek
" for the Cause.
" But suppose I shou'd grant, that there is not al-
" ways an equal Distribution of Affliction and Happi-
" ness here below. Man is a Creature who was created
" immortal, and a Creature consequently that will find
" a Compensation in Fraternity, for any seeming Ine-
" quality in his Dealing here. But the Creatures of a
" Poetical Creator are imaginary and transitory; they
" have no longer duration, than the Representation of
" their respective Fables; and consequently if they of-
" fend, they must be punish'd during that Representa-
" tion; and therefore we are very far from pretending

" that Poetical Juſtice is an equal Repreſentation of th
" Juſtice of the *Almighty*.

" We freely confeſs that it is a narrow, and a ver
" imperfect Type of it; ſo very narrow, and ſo ver
" imperfect, that it is forc'd by temporal to repreſe
" eternal Puniſhment; and therefore when we ſhow
" Man unfortunate in *Tragedy* for not reſtraining h
" Paſſions, we mean, that every one will for ſuch neg
" lect be infallibly puniſh'd by infinite Juſtice, eith
" here, or hereafter.

" If upon this Foot we examine the Tragedies of So
" PHOCLES and EURIPIDES, we ſhall find in the
" moſt Beautiful Pieces, they are impartial Executors o
" *Poetical Juſtice*; and it is upon this Foot that ARIS
" TOTLE requires, that we ſhou'd examine them
" Your Correſpondent I muſt confeſs is in the right
" when he ſays, that Philoſopher declares for Tra
" gedies, whoſe Cataſtrophes are unhappy with Relation
" to the principal Characters; but then what Inſtruc
" tions does he give us for the forming thoſe princip
" Characters? We are neither to make them very vir
" tuous Perſons on the one ſide, that is to ſay, Perſon
" who abſolutely command their Paſſions, nor on th
" other ſide Villains, who are actuated by inveterat
" Malice; but ſomething between theſe two, that is t
" ſay, Perſons who, neglecting their Paſſions, ſuffe
" them to grow outragious, and to hurry them to Ac
" tions, which they would otherwiſe abhor; and tha
" Philoſopher expreſly declares, as we have ſhow
" above, that to make a virtuous Man unhappy, that i
" a Man who abſolutely commands his Paſſions, woul
" create Horor inſtead of Compaſſion, and would b
" deteſted by all the World." And thus we have ſhow
that ARISTOTLE is for Poetical Juſtice, tho' he b
not always for unhappy Cataſtrophes.

Thus far Mr. DENNIS, which I think is a perfe
Confutation of ſo fundamental an Error in *Tragedy*.

I cannot (aſſum'd *Tyro*) but allow the Force of M
DENNIS's Reaſons; but I am afraid that we build to
much

much on the Authority of *Ariſtotle*, who ſeems to me to be a little inconſiſtent with himſelf in the very End and Aim of *Tragedy*. He tells us, that the End and Aim of that Poem, is to move *Terror* or *Fear*, and *Compaſſion*, and at the ſame time pretends that this Poem is to cure us of theſe two Paſſions, ſo that he propoſes to raiſe that as the Effect and Deſign of *Tragedy*, which Tragedy is deſign'd to deliver us from.

I am pleas'd to hear this Objection (ſaid LAUDON) from you at this Time, becauſe I have heard it urg'd by a very ſenſible and ingenious Gentleman of my Acquaintance with ſome Ardour; but if you would both reflect, there is no manner of Inconſiſtence in this; for *Ariſtotle* never pretends that *Tragedy* is deſign'd to eradicate and deſtroy theſe two Paſſions, but that it is to purge them, that is, to take away that Violence which they may have on a Mind too much poſſeſs'd by them, and reduce them to ſuch a Degree of Temperance, as that they may not have a Power of carrying us from, or contrary to the Rules and Dictates of right Reaſon; and this is certainly beſt done by their Motion; for by the Frequency or Vehemence of that Motion, the Paſſion grows naturally of leſs Force and Power, as Experience may convince us. I have known a certain *Tragedy*, in our *Engliſh* Language, which on the firſt reading mov'd Compaſſion ſo much, that it was impoſſible to ſtop a Flood of Tears; yet I have read it ſo often, and let it move me ſo much, that at laſt I could peruſe it without a Tear.

Thus in the Occurrences of Life, a Perſon poſſeſt with an extreme tender Nature, is ruffled by every Object that can furniſh it with the leaſt Ground of Concern, and that without regard to the Strictneſs of Juſtice, and Reaſon, which may ſometimes lead us into Errors of ill Conſequence. This Exceſs of Pity is what *Tragedy* would correct; the ſame may be ſaid of FEAR or TERROR, a Paſſion perhaps yet more injurious to our Happineſs than the former, and more general too; by ſeeing frequent Inſtances or Examples on the Stage, of the Miſ-

fortunes that happen to the Great and the Fortunate, they become more familiar, and by conſequence loſe half their Terror.

But dear *Laudon*, (ſaid MANILIA) why muſt the Tragic Poet be confin'd to move *Terror* and *Compaſſion*? Why not *Admiration*, or ev'n *Love*?

I would not (replied the fair *Moriſina*) pretend to anticipate what my dear LAUDON has to anſwer to your Queſtion, but beg leave to offer what occurs to me on that Head. You ask in my Opinion a Queſtion which bears a very eaſy Reply; I ſhall not pretend to examine the Nature of the Paſſions, or offer the Motives why the firſt Inventors, Refiners, and I may ſay the Perfecters of this Poem eſtabliſh'd this as a Maxim, ſince its being by them eſtabliſh'd, ſeems to me ſufficient to bind all, who will pretend to write in the ſame Manner; I ſhall not pretend to examine whether there may not be an entertaining Poem found out and written, tho' directed to other Aims; yet I muſt then ſay, that it cannot be a *Tragedy*, you may call it what you pleaſe; I can't ſay but you may find out ſome other ſort of Stitches in the Samplar than *Croſs-Stitch*, *Iriſh-Stitch*, and thoſe now known; but this I am ſure, that whatever you find out in that kind can't be call'd *Croſs-Stitch* or *Iriſh-Stitch*, or the like, as it is now, you muſt give it a new Name, and different, for we will not bound your Fancy nor your Invention. ſ Thus when the *Greeks* had invented the three Orders of Architecture, the *Doric*, *Ionic*, and *Corinthian*, you were not at Liberty to make a fourth, without the Propriety of any of theſe, and yet call it by the old Names; and therefore the *Italians* had two Orders peculiar to themſelves, that is, the *Tuſcan*, and the *Compoſite*, they diſtinguiſh'd them from the *Greek* Orders by Name, as well as Form and Proprieties.

The *Greek* Poets, and the great *Stagyrite* the Father of Critics, from their Practice have eſtabliſh'd the End of Tragedy to be the moving *Terror* and *Compaſſion*; and whatever Play or Interlude is written under the Name of

of a *Tragedy* without this Form, is in Reality no *Tragedy*, but what elſe you will pleaſe to call it.

Tho' what my dear *Moriſina* has ſaid (aſſum'd LAUDON) be certainly true, yet I am of Opinion, that there may be very good and ſubſtantial Reaſons given for this Choice of the Antients. Firſt, becauſe all the other Paſſions may be ſo manag'd, as to produce *Fear* and *Compaſſion*, but not the contrary; and next perhaps there is ſomething ſtill to be drawn from the very Nature of the Paſſions, and their Generation in the Humane Mind; but that is a Diſquiſition too nice, Philoſophical and tedious, and too little to the Purpoſe for this Place, as requiring a View of all that Part of Moral Philoſophy, which relates to the Paſſions and their Nature; it is therefore ſufficient to know, that by the Rules of Art, and the Practice of the Antients, this is already eſtabliſh'd, as *Moriſina* has obſerv'd.

As for *Admiration* and *Love* (aſſum'd I) I have a Word or two to offer. Firſt, *Admiration* is too calm a Paſſion for *Tragedy*, and requires more Time to its Motion than this Poem allows, in which all is violent and ſwift. Pardon me, I do not mean that the Marvellous or Wonderful is not the Buſineſs of Tragedy, for that is granted on all Sides, but that mild Emotion which is the proper Object of the Narrative or Heroic Poem. But this is not the Admiration which *Corneille* boaſts of having added to the old Tragic Poets, and is only a ſurprize from the Knot of a vain Intrigue, which contains nothing Tragical, as will be ſeen when you come to the Fable.

Next for *Love*, I confeſs it is my Opinion, that as made uſe of in our Modern Plays, it is directly oppoſite to that Majeſty which this Poem requires, whilſt, as *Rapin* obſerves, we are entertain'd with the trifling Jealouſies and Addreſſes, of which an amorous Intrigue is full. *Ovid*, who was Love's Maſter, has told us, that Love and Majeſty very ill agree, nor ever ſubſiſt in the ſame Subject. Not that I am for excluding that Paſſion from

the Stage, but then I am for touching only that Part of it which is consistent with the Character of the Poem. And the Antients themselves in those Plays which are yet extant have made use of it, as *Euripides* in his *Alceſtis* and *Helena*, but then it is between Man and Wife: For indeed it seems a little inconsistent with that Character of Modesty, which is essential to the Sex, to fly out into those Transports and Fondnesses which we see before Matrimony.

It is true indeed the Antients had an Advantage in this Particular which we want, and that was their Betrothing before the Formal Marriage; and yet we find how cautious *Sophocles* is in his *Antigone*, who is the betrothed Spouse of *Hæmon*; no Fondness, none of the tender Sentiments of Monsieur *Racine*'s Lovers, or of those of our *English* Stage, tho' *Hæmon* be so desperately in Love, as to Sacrifice his own Life, on the Death of his Mistress.

Shakespear himself has scarce any thing of it; tho' it must be allow'd that *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* abound in Instances of the contrary: But with submission to the vogue, I must needs say that these Gentlemen knew little of the Nature of this Poem, or indeed of any Part of it, their Characters being generally out of Nature and inconsistent with themselves, and the Degrees and Stations of their Persons; where modest Women are brought in talking like Strumpets, and Kings like Footmen.

What a difference is there between *Nourmahed* in the *Aurengezebe* of Mr. *Dryden*, and the *Phædra* of EURIPIDES? The former talks like a Woman abandon'd to Prostitution in the most criminal kind; the latter is every where modest, and her Honour and her Virtue struggling with the Punishment inflicted on her by the Goddess *Venus*.

I am not therefore for excluding Love from our *Tragedies*; but then I would have a Love consistent with Modesty, and by consequence agreeable to the Character of the Sex, for I know of no manner of Reason for brand-

branding the Sex with the Exorbitance of a *Betty Sands* of infamous Memory. Nay, I am entirely againſt all thoſe tedious Scenes of Courtſhip, which muſt bring ſomething in View injurious to the Virtue of a Virgin, and yet yield nothing fine or entertaining to a Man that knows any thing of Nature and the Proprieties of Character.

The Folly of this way of Writing is admirably ſhown in the excellent Eſſay on Poetry, in theſe Words.

But ſince the Poets, we of late have known,
Shine in no Dreſs ſo much as in their own,
The better by Example to convince,
Caſt but a View on this wrong Side of Senſe.
Firſt a Soliloquy is calmly made,
Where ev'ry Reaſon is exactly weigh'd;
Which once perform'd, moſt opportunely comes
A Hero frighted at the Noiſe of Drums,
For her ſweet ſake, whom at firſt Sight he loves,
And all in Metaphor *his Paſſion proves;*
But ſome ſad Accident, tho' yet unknown,
Parting this Pair, to leave the Swain alone.
He ſtrait grows jealous, yet we know not why,
And, to oblige his Rival, needs will die:
But firſt he makes a Speech, wherein he tells
The abſent Nymph, how much his Flame excels,
And yet bequeaths her generouſly now
To that dear Rival whom he does not know;
Who ſtraight appears (but who can Fate withſtand?)
Too late, alas! to hold his haſty Hand,
That juſt has giv'n himſelf the cruel Stroke,
At which this very Stranger's Heart is broke;
He, more to his new Friend than Miſtreſs kind,
Moſt ſadly mourns at being left behind;
Of ſuch a Death prefers the pleaſing Charms
To Love, and living in a Lady's Arms.
How ſhameful, and what monſtrous Things are theſe?
And then they rail at thoſe they cannot pleaſe;

Conclude us only partial to the Dead,
And grudge the Sign of old Ben. Johnſon's Head.

Theſe are the Beauties and Advantages of our addi Love to our *Tragedies*. Not (as I have ſaid) that I a for excluding that Paſſion or the Fair Sex from t Stage; but that Part only which contains the vain, id and Romantic Addreſſes to the Ladies before Marria There is nothing more moving than the Loves of *Be dera* and *Jaffier*, but that is after Marriage, as that P of *Monimia* and *Caſtalio* is, which affects the Audien in ſo ſenſible a Manner. The ſame may be ſaid of t *Alceſtis* and *Helena* of *Euripides*, and even the *Anti* of *Sophocles*, who is contracted or eſpous'd by *Ha* before the beginning of the Play; and yet that So raign of Tragedy is ſo cautious of invading the Cha ter of the Sex, or mingling the Tenderneſſes wh contain nothing Great and Majeſtic, or Terrible, truly Pathetic, that there is ſcarce ſo much ſaid in Part at leaſt as to make it ſeem a Character of Love.

If we go to the never to be too much admir'd *Sha ſpear*, we find *Juliet* and *Deſdemona* both Wives, leaſt when they begin to engage the Attention of Audience. But Romances were extremely in vogue ter the Reſtoration, and in them to ſeek Nature wo be to very little Purpoſe; from theſe our Poets, I m our *Play-wrights*, took their Ideas of Heroes, Hero and Love, and this produc'd thoſe Monſters, on wh his Grace has ſo juſtly reflected in the Quotation I h given you.

I know very well (ſaid TYRO) that to deny the J tice of this Cenſure of the *Eſſay*, is to go againſt R ſon; and yet if the Buſineſs of Poetry is to pleaſe, tainly the Poets of thoſe Days evidently gain'd t Point. Nay, we ſee on the Revival of many of th condemn'd by the *Rehearſal*, that they have been ceiv'd with Applauſe.

It is indeed (aſſum'd LAUDON) very ſurprizing to ſee that very *Rehearſal* acted for three or four Days together to full Houſes, and immediately after, perhaps, Plays not leſs throng'd, on which that was either written, or at leaſt which are guilty of all the Abſurdities exploded in that pleaſant Criticiſm. This, my Friend *Tyro*, is at leaſt a ſtrong Proof that our Audience is extremely ſtupid, and give their Approbation not by Judgment or their own good Taſte, as being on contradictory Foundations, and that therefore to fix the Value of a Piece, we muſt have recourſe to the *better* tho' *fewer* Judges, who underſtand Nature and Art. For either the *Rehearſal*, or the Authors were in the wrong; chuſe which you will, their promiſcuous Applauſe proves that the Audience muſt be in the wrong.

Another Inſtance of this abſurd Taſte of our *Engliſh* Andience is, the *Opera*, which tho' ſo admirably expos'd and ridicul'd by the ſame noble Peer in his *Rehearſal*, yet has been allow'd and encourag'd to that degree, that if the Expence that our Nobility and Gentry have been at in that particular, had been beſtow'd in the promoting *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, we might by this time have had a Stage equal to that of *Athens*. But it is remarkable that as the chief Faults of the Drama or *Active Poem* have been diſcover'd by the Nobility, I mean two of them, the late Duke of *Buckingham*, and the preſent; ſo none have contributed more largely to the Corruption, and indeed Deſtruction of it, than the People of Quality.

Villain thou Lyeſt!
Arm! arm! Gonſalio *arm.*

A noble Battle indeed, and very agreeable to Nature, repreſented in *Recitativo Muſic*: This is a Ridicule on Sir *William Davenants* Siege of *Rhodes*. But if we conſider juſtly, Sir *William* was not ſo much to blame in that, as we have ſince been, for he was forc'd to write in

that Way by the Iniquity of the Times. Plays were forbid, and Muſical Entertainments ſuffer'd, ſo that he was fain to ſteer this Courſe, becauſe a better was not permitted; but of late we have taken up that abſurd Entertainment out of choice, when nothing could incline us but a moſt abandon'd Whimſy.

That I may not be thought to be ſingular in my Cenſure, hear what a *French* Gentleman, and that no leſs than Monſieur St. *Evremond*, ſays to that Duke of *Buckingham* on this Subject.

I ſhall (ſays he) begin with great Freedom in telling you, that I am no great Admirer of *Comedies in Muſic*, (for ſo the *French* call the *Opera*) ſuch as now a days we ſee. I confeſs that I am pretty well pleas'd with their Magnificence; the *Machines* have ſomething ſurprizing, the Muſic in ſome Places is charming, the whole together ſeems marvellous; but it muſt be granted me alſo, that theſe Marvels are very tedious, for where the Mind has ſo little to do, there is a Neceſſity that the Senſes muſt languiſh after the firſt Pleaſure, that ſurprize gives us. The Eyes are taken up, and at length grow weary of being continually fixt upon the Objects. In the beginning of the Conſorts the Juſtneſs of the Concords is obſerv'd, and nothing eſcapes of all the Varieties, that unite for making the Sweetneſs of the Harmony. Some time after, the Inſtruments ſtun us, and the Muſic is no more to the Ears than a confus'd Sound, that ſuffers nothing to be diſtinguiſh'd. But who can bear the Tedioufneſs of *Recitativo*, which has neither the Charm of Song, nor the agreeable Force of Words? The Soul tir'd out with a long Attention, in which it finds nothing to affect it, ſeeks within itſelf ſome ſecret Motion to be touch'd with: The Mind, which in vain has expected Impreſſions from without, gives Way to idle Muſing, or is diſſatisfied with its own Uſeleſsneſs. In ſhort, it is ſo univerſally tireſome, that no Thought but how to get out; and the only

only Pleaſure that remains to the languiſhing Spectators, is the Hope of a ſpeedy End put to the Show.

The Reaſon why commonly I grow weary ſoon at an OPERA, is that I never yet ſaw one, which appear'd not to me deſpicable in the Diſpoſition of the Subject, and in the Verſes. Now it is in vain to charm the Ears, or flatter the Eyes, if the Mind be not ſatisfied; my Soul being in better Intelligence with my Mind than with my Senſes, ſtruggles againſt the Impreſſions which it may receive, or at leaſt fails of giving an agreeable Conſent to them, without which even the moſt delightful Objects can never afford me great Pleaſure: A Foppery charg'd with Muſic, Dances, Machines, and Decorations, is a pompous Foppery; but ſtill it is a *Foppery*, it is an ugly Ground under beautiful Ornaments, through which I ſee it with much Diſſatisfaction. There is another Thing in *Opera's* ſo contrary to Nature, that it offends my Imagination, and that is the ſinging the whole Piece from the Beginning to the End, as if the Perſons repreſented had ridiculouſly agreed to treat in Muſic both the moſt common and the moſt important Affairs of their Life. Is it to be ſuppos'd that a Maſter calls his Servant, and ſends him on an Errand ſinging? That one Friend imparts a Secret to another ſinging? That Men deliberate on Affairs of State ſinging, *&c.*

I might go on from this ingenious Author, but that firſt, I think here is enough to cure any Man of common Senſe of ſo ſenſeleſs an Inclination, as an Indulgence to Opera's, and next they have at length made their Exit in this Town. But it muſt be confeſs'd not by the Improvement of the Taſte of thoſe Gentlemen, who contributed ſo extravagantly to their Support; but becauſe they grew weary of the Expence, there having been collected on that Account near 100000 *l.* from their firſt Appearance to their Departure.

Here LAUDON obſerv'd that TYRO ſmil'd a little largely — What have I ſaid (purſu'd LAUDON) my

good

good Friend TYRO, to give you Occaſion for that ſar-caſtic Smile?

To deal plainly with you (reply'd *Tyro*) it is to hear you quote an Author againſt *Opera's*, whoſe Judgment neither you nor *Gamaliel* will allow in other Things; for Monſieur St. *Evremond*, in the ſame Collection of Eſſays, declares againſt the Antients in a very particular Manner, in his Eſſay about Tragedy.

Alas! My good Friend (return'd LAUDON) you miſtake me very much in this Quotation, if you think it was brought in in Deference to the Name and Authority of the Perſon, I only gave you that for the Reaſon it contain'd, not for the Name. I know St. *Everemond* too well to think him a Man of Judgment in all Things, but what he has ſaid here is built on Reaſon, and therefore it matters not much from what Hand it comes. When he talks of the Antients, he ſpeaks of what he by no means underſtood, ev'n by his own Confeſſion in that very Eſſay you mention. He was a very ſuperficial Writer, and was often confuted by *Iſaac Voſſius* at the Dutcheſs of *Mazarine*'s, when he attempted to go beyond his Knowledge. That *Voſſius* was not only a compleat Scholar (as to the Languages they call the learned) but a Man of Politeneſs: St. *Evremond* was a Man of Wit, and a fine Gentleman, but knew very little of the Antients, and in that very Eſſay you mention, contradicts himſelf moſt egregiouſly. But we have not much to do with the Controverſy between the *Antients* and *Moderns*, I think *Boileau*, and Sir *William Temple* have not yet been anſwer'd by *Perault*, or Mr. *Wootton*. And therefore we leave that Point as we find it; and proceed to our Conſideration of our preſent Subject the Stage.

I think that all *Poetry* may be brought under theſe three Heads, the *Active*, the *Narrative*, and the *Mixture* more or leſs of both; to the *Active* belong the Paſtoral and Tragedy, and Comedy; to the *Narrative* the Heroic Poem, and all Hiſtorical Verſes, (for I queſ-

tion

tion whether I ſhould call them Poems or not) and of theſe two every ſort and diviſion of Poetry participates more or leſs; nay, they make uſe of one another as Occaſion requires, for the Heroic Poem as often proves *Active*, as the Perſons ſpeak themſelves, as in the firſt Book of *Homer*, and ſeveral Parts of *Virgil*; and the *Active* or Dramatic Poem makes uſe of Narration to give an Account of Things not proper to be repreſented; I ſpeak chiefly of the Antients, where thoſe Decencies were much more ſtrictly obſerv'd than with us; the *French* Tragic Poets indeed, after the Reformation of their Stage, have been pretty nice in this Particular.

To come therefore to thoſe Rules, and Diſcovery of thoſe Faults in Writings of this kind, I ſhall begin with the *Eſſay on Poetry*, becauſe it contains ſome things not touch'd on by either *Horace* or *Ariſtotle*.

I am glad, ſaid *Gamaliel*, that you have quoted that noble Author, becauſe the fair *Manilia* ſeem'd to argue me guilty of Flattery, when the laſt time we met, I ſo often drew my Obſervations from him. But, alas! I have always been more for cultivating my Acquaintance with the truly learned in all Arts and Sciences, (who are ſeldom the Favourites of Fortune) than with the *Great*, who ought to be the Patrons of them; and my Fear of that Imputation has thus long delayed my finiſhing my Notes on this Poem, both in *Latin* and *Engliſh*, till the Nobleman is dead, and whom by courſe of Years I may very well expect to ſurvive, when what I ſhall ſay cannot be ſo interpreted; for then thoſe puſhing Fellows, who now have the Art of ingratiating themſelves, will either be ſilent in their Zeal, or quite forget his Merit. But I, who am only a Lover of Truth, ſhall find no check in ſaying much more than I now will do. But this I muſt add, that this moſt Noble Peer, has, in his Alteration of *Shakeſpear's Julius Caſar*, ſhown that he is not a meer Critic, but has a Genius for the Practice of the Art himſelf, as well as the Judg-

Judgment to direct others. But you, my Friend, who are above all Expectations, may say what you please, without the suspicion of Flattery.

Nay, good *Gamaliel* (interrupted MANILIA) be not too severe on a transitory Word of mine, which was not meant to lessen the Merit of this Noble Critic, whom I value, and esteem as much as yourself, but only to show my Opinion of most Men who are for extolling the Works of the Great Men in Power, Wealth and Quality, in a Manner they would not follow to Men of a lesser Consideration.

Well, well, (said LAUDON) it matters not much what Motive made the bright MANILIA so hard upon you; tho' Ladies have always the Privilege of saying what they please, and the Freedom of the Tea-Table, uses them to such Liberties, that they cannot quit in their other Conversations.

To proceed therefore as I design'd ——

Here rest, my Muse, suspend my Cares awhile,
A greater Enterprize attends thy Toil.
As some young Eagle, that designs to fly
A long unwonted Journey thro' the Sky,
Considers all the dangerous Way before,
Over what Lands and Seas she is to soar;
Doubts her own Strength so far, and justly fears
That lofty Road of airy Travellers:
But yet incited by some fair Design,
That does her Hopes beyond her Fears incline,
Prunes ev'ry Feather, views herself with Care,
At last resolv'd, she cleaves the yielding Air.
Away she flies, so strong, so high, so fast,
She lessens to us, and is lost at last.
So (but too weak for such a weighty Thing)
The Muse inspires a sharper Note to sing:
And why should Truth offend, when only told
To guide the Ignorant, and warn the Bold?

On

On then, my Muſe, advent'rously engage
To give Inſtructions that concern the Stage.
The Unities of Action, Time, and Place,
Which, if obſerv'd, give Plays ſo great a Grace,
Are, tho' but little practis'd, too well known
To be taught here, where we pretend alone
From nicer Faults to purge the preſent Age,
Leſs obvious Errors of the Engliſh *Stage.*
Firſt then, Soliloquies *had need be few,*
Extreamly ſhort, and ſpoke in Paſſion too;
Our Lovers talking to themſelves, for want
Of others, make the Pit their Confident:
Nor is the Matter mended yet, if thus
They truſt a Friend, only to tell it us.
Th'Occaſion ſhould as naturally fall,
As when Bellario *confeſſes all.*
Figures of Speech, which Poets think ſo fine,
Art's needleſs Varniſh, to make Nature ſhine,
Are all but Paint upon a beauteous Face,
And in Deſcription only claim a Place:
But to make Rage declaim, and Grief diſcourſe,
From Lovers in Deſpair fine Things to force,
Muſt needs ſucceed; for who can chuſe but pity
A dying Hero miſerably witty?
But oh! the Dialogues, where Jeſt and Mock
Is held up, like a Reſt at Shittle-cock!
Or elſe, like Bells, eternally they chime;
They ſigh in Simile, and die in Rime.
What Things are theſe who would be Poets thought,
By Nature not inſpir'd, nor Learning taught?
Some Wit they have, and therefore may deſerve
A better Courſe than this by which they ſtarve.
But to write Plays! why, 'tis a bold Pretence
To Judgment, Breeding, Wit, and Eloquence:
Nay more, for they muſt look within to find
Thoſe ſecret Turns of Nature in the Mind.
Without this Part, in vain would be the Whole,
And but a Body all without a Soul.

All

All this together yet is but a Part
Of Dialogue, that great and pow'rful Art,
Now almoſt loſt, which the old Grecians *knew,*
From whom the Romans *fainter Copies drew,*
Scare comprehended ſince but by a few.
Plato *and* Lucian *are the beſt Remains*
Of all the Wonders which this Art contains:
Yet to ourſelves we Juſtice muſt allow,
Shakeſpear *and* Fletcher *are the Wonders now.*
Conſider then, and read them o'er and o'er,
Go ſee them play'd, then read them as before;
For tho' in many Things they groſly fail,
Over our Paſſions ſtill they ſo prevail,
That our own Grief by theirs is rock'd aſleep;
The Dull are forc'd to feel, the Wiſe to weep.
Their Beauties imitate, avoid their Faults,
Firſt on a Plot employ thy careful Thoughts;
Turn it with Time a thouſand ſeveral Ways:
This oft alone has giv'n Succeſs to Plays.
Reject that vulgar Error, which appears
So fair, of making perfect Characters:
There's no ſuch Thing in Nature, and you'll draw
A faultleſs Monſter, which the World ne'er ſaw.
Some Faults muſt be, that his Misfortunes drew,
But ſuch as may deſerve Compaſſion too.
Beſides the main Deſign compos'd with Art,
Each moving Scene muſt be a Plot apart.
Contrive each little Turn, mark ev'ry Place,
As Painters firſt chalk out the future Face:
Yet be not fondly your own Slave for this;
But change hereafter what appears amiſs.
Think not ſo much where ſhining Thoughts to place,
As what a Man would ſay in ſuch a Caſe.

What follows in his Grace relates to Comedy, till he comes to the Quotation which you have already given us, *Gamaliel*, and that concludes what the Eſſay affords on this Principal Part of the *Active* Poem.

I think

I think theſe admirable Lines and Inſtructions need Explanation, they ought to be thoroughly ſtudy'd by , who will pretend to write *Tragedy* with the Apobation of Men of Senſe and Underſtanding. Our liloquies are in moſt of our Plays very abſurd, and ly ſubject to my Lord Duke's judicious Reflections. confeſs I cannot entirely agree with his Grace, as to *ato* and *Lucian* in the Art of Dialogue, I mean Dratic Dialogue, eſpecially that of Tragedy. For the ntients in *Sophocles* and *Euripides* have left us much ore valuable Remains. And indeed if the other Rules liver'd in this Eſſay be follow'd juſtly, the Perfection the Dialogue proper to this ſort of Poetry can never il.

As to what is ſaid of the Plot, I ſhall have occaſion examine it when I come to *Ariſtotle* on that Head; here I ſhall ſhew that this is ſo far from leſſening the nportance and Preheminence of the Fable above all e other Parts of Tragedy, that it really exalts it.

But before we come to the Precepts of *Ariſtotle*, I all give you the Sentiments of the great *French* Poet d Critic *Boileau*, to ſhow that our Deference is not id entirely to our own Men of Merit: And then paſſing ghtly over what *Horace* has left us, I ſhall conclude is Diſcourſe with the Rules of *Tragedy* drawn from ature, and her beſt Interpreter *Ariſtotle*. But hear ileau on this Subject.

There's not a Monſter bred beneath the Sky,
But, well diſpos'd by Art, may pleaſe the Eye:
A curious Workman, by his Skill Divine,
From an ill Object makes a good Deſign.
Thus, to delight us, TRAGEDY *in Tears,*
Provokes, for Oedipus, *our Hopes and Fears:*
For Parricide Oreſtes *asks Relief;*
And, to encreaſe our Pleaſure, cauſes Grief.
You then, who in this noble Art would riſe,
Come; and in lofty Verſe diſpute the Prize.

Would

Would you upon the Stage acquire Renown,
And for your Judges ſummon all the Town?
Would you your Works for ever ſhould remain,
And, after Ages paſt, be ſought again?
In all you write, obſerve with Care and Art
To move the Paſſions, and incline the Heart.
If, in a labour'd Act, the pleaſing Rage
Cannot our Hopes and Fears by turns ingage,
Nor in our Mind a feeling Pity raiſe;
In vain with Learned Scenes you fill your Plays:
Your cold Diſcourſe can never move the Mind
Of a ſtern Critic, naturally unkind;
Who, juſtly tir'd with your pedantick Flight,
Or falls aſleep, or cenſures all you write.
The Secret is, Attention firſt to gain;
To move our Minds, and then to entertain:
That from the very opening of the Scenes,
The firſt may ſhew us what the Author means.
I'm tir'd to ſee an Actor on the Stage,
Who knows not whether he's to laugh, or rage;
Who, an Intrigue unravelling in vain,
Inſtead of pleaſing, keeps my Mind in pain:
I'd rather much the nauſeous Dunce ſhould ſay
Downright, my Name is Hector *in the Play;*
Than with a Maſs of Miracles, ill join'd,
Confound my Ears, and not inſtruct my Mind.
Let not your Subject be too late expreſs'd;
Nor Rules of Probability tranſgreſs'd.
A Spaniſh *Poet may, with good Event,*
In one Day's ſpace whole Ages repreſent;
There, oft the Hero of a wand'ring Stage
Begins a Child, and ends the Play in Age.
But we, who are by Reaſon's Rules confin'd,
Will, that with Art the Poem be deſign'd;
That Unity of Action, Time, and Place
Keep the Stage full, and all your Labours grace.
Write not what cannot be with eaſe conceiv'd;
Some Truths may be too ſtrong to be believ'd:

A fooli

A fooliſh Wonder cannot entertain;
My Mind's not mov'd, if your Diſcourſe be vain.
You may relate, what would offend the Eye;
Seeing, indeed, would better ſatisfy:
But there are Objects, which a curious Art
Hides from the Eyes, yet offers to the Heart.
The Mind is moſt agreeably ſurpriz'd,
When a well-woven Subject, long diſguis'd,
You on a ſudden artfully unfold,
And give the Whole another Face, and Mould.
At firſt the Tragedy *was void of Art;*
A Song, where each Man danc'd, and ſung his Part;
And of God Bacchus *roaring out the Praiſe,*
Sought a good Vintage from their jolly Lays:
Then Wine, and Joy, were ſeen in each Man's Eyes,
And a fat Goat was the beſt Singer's Prize.
Theſpis was firſt, who all beſmear'd with Lee,
Began this Pleaſure for Poſteritie:
And, with his carted Actors, and a Song,
Amus'd the People as he paſs'd along.
Next, Æſchylus *the diff'rent Perſons plac'd,*
And with a better Maſque his Players grac'd:
Upon a Theatre his Verſe expreſs'd,
And ſhow'd his Hero with a Buskin dreſs'd.
Then Sophocles, *the Genius of his Age,*
Increas'd the Pomp and Beauty of the Stage,
Ingag'd the Chorus *Song in every Part,*
And poliſh'd rugged Verſe by Rules of Art:
He, in the Greek, *did thoſe Perfections gain,*
Which the weak Latins *never could attain.*
Our pious Fathers in their Prieſt-rid Age,
As impious and profane, abhor'd the Stage:
A Troop of ſilly Pilgrims, as 'tis ſaid,
Fooliſhly zealous, ſcandalouſly play'd
The Angels, God, the Virgin, and the Saints,
(Inſtead of Heroes, and of Love's Complaints.)
At laſt, right Reaſon did her Laws reveal,
And ſhow'd the Folly of their ill-plac'd Zeal,

Silenc'd

Silenc'd those Nonconformists of the Age,
And rais'd the lawful Heroes of the Stage:
Only th' Athenian *Mask was laid aside,*
And Chorus by the Music was supply'd.
Ingenious Love, inventive of new Arts,
Mingled in Plays, and quickly touch'd our Hearts:
This Passion never could Resistance find,
But knows the shortest Passage to the Mind.
Paint, if you will, a Hero smit with Love;
But let him not like a tame Shepherd move:
Let not Achilles *be like* Thyrsis *seen,*
Or for a Cyrus *show an* Artamene:
Let Love, *oft try'd by Strugglings most severe,*
Not Virtue, but Infirmity appear.
Of Romance Heroes, shun the low Design;
Yet to great Hearts some Human Weakness join:
Achilles *must, with* Homer's *Heat, engage;*
For an Affront I'm pleas'd to see him rage.
By those light Frailties of your Hero's Breast
The Force of Human Nature is confess'd.
To leave known Rules you cannot be allow'd;
Make Agamemnon *Covetous and* Proud;
Æneas *in Religious Rites austere;*
Keep to each Man his proper Character.
Of Countries and of Times the Humours know;
From diff'rent Climates, diff'rent Customs flow:
And strive to shun their Fault, who vainly dress
An Antique Hero like some Modern Ass;
Who make old Romans *like our* English *move,*
Show Cato *sparkish, or make* Brutus *love.*
In a Romance those Errors are excus'd:
There 'tis enough that, reading, we're amus'd:
Rules too severe would there be useless found;
But the strict Scene *must have a juster Bound:*
Exact Decorum we must always find.
If then you form some Hero in your Mind,
Be sure your Image with it self agree;
For what he first appears, he still must be.

Affecte

Affected Wits will nat'rally incline
To paint their Figures by their own Deſign:
Your Bully Poets, Bully Heroes write;
Chapman *in* Buſſy D'Ambois *took Delight,*
And thought Perfection was to huff and fight.
Wiſe Nature by Variety does pleaſe;
Clothe diff'ring Paſſions, in a diff'ring Dreſs.
Bold Anger in rough haughty Words appears;
Sorrow is humble, and diſſolves in Tears.
Make not your Hecuba *with Fury rage,*
And ſhow a ranting Grief upon the Stage;
Or vainly tell how the rough Tanais *bore*
His Sevenfold Waters to the *Euxine* Shore:
Theſe ſwoln Expreſſions, this affected Noiſe
Shows like ſome Pedant, that declaims to Boys.
In Sorrow, you muſt ſofter Methods keep;
And to excite our Tears, your ſelf muſt weep:
Thoſe bombaſt Words with which ill Plays abound,
Come not from Hearts that are in Sadneſs drown'd.
The Theater for a young Poet's Rimes,
Is a bold Venture in our knowing Times:
An Author cannot eas'ly purchaſe Fame;
Critics are always apt to hiſs, and blame:
You may be judg'd by every Aſs in Town;
The Privilege is bought for Half a Crown.
To pleaſe, you muſt a hundred Changes try;
Sometimes be humble, ſometimes ſoar on high:
In noble Thoughts muſt every where abound,
Be Eaſy, Pleaſant, Solid, and Profound.
To theſe you muſt ſurprizing Touches join,
And ſhew us a new Wonder in each Line;
That all in a juſt Method well deſign'd,
May leave a ſtrong Impreſſion on the Mind.
Theſe are the Arts that Tragedy *maintain.*

I have been the more large in this Quotation from ne judicious and learned *French* Poet and Critic; be-uſe, beſides his general Rules of the Art of *Tragedy*, he gives

gives you a ſort of Abſtract of its Hiſtory ſufficient
this Time and Place, with only this Obſervation
the learned *Grotius* in his valuable Collections conte
that *Theſpis* was not the original Inventor of this
tive Poetry, but that it began many Years before.
be that as it will, it is of very little Conſequence to
Art, of which *Ariſtotle* has delivered the Rules, wh
are followed in all *Tragedies* of any intrinſick Wor

Tho' Monſieur *Boileau* has here, as in many ot
Parts of his Works, made bold with *Horace*, and tra
crib'd his Notions and Sentiments, yet I ſhall give
them in the Words of *Horace* himſelf, and that is a
as my Lord *Roſcommon* has enabled me in his Tran
tion, tho' I confeſs that I cannot help thinking that
Lordſhip has more than once fail'd in the full Senſe
his Author, and perhaps ſometimes in the whole Se
of him. But however that may be, I ſhall not conte
with the noble Tranſlator; for in the main, I think
may with Juſtice be allow'd, that he has come nea
to that excellent *Roman* than any other, who has und
taken the ſame Task. But this muſt be obſerv'd, t
Horace ſo mingles his Precepts of *Tragedy* and C
medy, that they cannot be every where ſeparated. T
he comes to the *Drama*, or *active Poem* according
the Lord *Roſcommon*'s Tranſlation.

Why is he honour'd with a Poet's Name,
Who neither knows, nor will obſerve a Rule;
And chuſes to be ignorant and proud,
Rather than own his Ignorance, and learn?
Let ev'ry Thing have its due Place and Time.
A Comic Subject loves an humble Verſe,
Thyeſtes *ſcorns a low and comic Stile;*
Yet Comedy may ſometimes raiſe her Voice,
And Chremes *be allowed to foam and rail.*
Tragedians *too lay by their State to grieve;*
Peleus *and* Telephus, *exil'd and poor,*
Forget their ſwelling, and gigantic Words.

*

He that would have Spectators ſhare his Grief,
Muſt write not only well, but movingly,
And raiſe Mens Paſſions to what height he will.
We Weep and Laugh, as we ſee others do:
He only makes me ſad who ſhews the way,
And firſt is ſad himſelf; then Telephus,
I feel the weight of your Calamities,
And fancy all your Miſeries my own.
But if you act them ill, I ſleep or laugh:
Your Looks muſt alter, as your Subject does,
From kind to fierce, from wanton to ſevere:
For Nature forms, and ſoftens us within,
And writes our Fortunes Changes in our Face.
Pleaſure enchants, impetuous Rage tranſports,
And Grief dejects, and wrings the tortur'd Soul,
And theſe are all interpreted by Speech;
But he whoſe Words and Fortunes diſagree,
Abſurd, unpity'd, grows a publick Jeſt.
Obſerve the Characters of thoſe that ſpeak,
Whether an honeſt Servant, or a Cheat,
Or one whoſe Blood boils in his youthful Veins,
Or a grave Matron, or a buſy Nurſe,
Extorting Merchants, careful Husbandmen,
Argives, *or* Thebans, Aſians *or* Greeks.
Follow Report, or feign coherent Things;
Deſcribe Achilles, *as* Achilles *was,*
Impatient, raſh, inexorable, proud,
Scorning all Judges, and all Law but Arms;
Medea *muſt be all Revenge and Blood,*
Ino *all Tears,* Ixion *all Deceit,*
Io *muſt wander, and* Oreſtes *mourn.*
If your bold Muſe dare tread unbeaten Paths,
And bring new Characters upon the Stage,
Be ſure you keep them up to their firſt height.
New Subjects are not eaſily explain'd,
And you had better chuſe a well known Theme,
Than truſt to an Invention of your own;
Or what originally others writ,

May be ſo well diſguis'd, and ſo improv'd,
That with ſome Juſtice it may paſs for yours;
But then you muſt not Copy trivial things,
Nor Word for Word too faithfully Tranſlate,
Nor (as ſome ſervile Imitators do)
Preſcribe at firſt ſuch ſtrict uneaſy Rules,
As they muſt ever ſlaviſhly obſerve,
Or all the Laws of Decency renounce.
Begin not as th' old Poetaſter did,
(*Troy's* famous War, and *Priam's* Fate, I ſing)
In what will all this Oſtentation end?
The lab'ring Mountain ſcarce brings forth a Mou
How far is this from the Meonian *Stile?*
Muſe, ſpeak the Man, who, ſince the Siege of Tr
So many Towns, ſuch change of Manners ſaw.
One with a Flaſh begins, and ends in Smoak,
The other out of Smoak brings glorious Light,
And (without raiſing Expectation high)
Surprizes us with daring Miracles,
The bloody Leſtrygons *inhumane Feaſts,*
With all the Monſters of the Land and Sea;
How Scylla *bark'd, and* Polyphemus *roar'd:*
He doth not trouble us with Leda's *Eggs,*
When he begins to write the Trojan *War;*
Nor writing the Return of Diomed,
Go back as far as Meleager's *Death:*
Nothing is idle, each judicious Line
Inſenſibly acquaints us with the Plot;
He chuſes only what he can improve,
And Truth and Fiction are ſo aptly mix'd,
That all ſeems Uniform, and of a Piece.
Now hear what ev'ry Auditor expects;
If you intend that he ſhould ſtay to hear
The Epilogue, and ſee the Curtain fall;
Mind how our Tempers alter with our Years,
And by thoſe Rules form all your Characters.
One that hath newly learn'd to ſpeak and go,
Loves childiſh Plays, is ſoon provok'd and pleas'd,

*

And changes ev'ry Hour his wav'ring Mind.
A Youth that firſt caſts off his Tutor's Yoke,
Loves Horſes, Hounds, and Sports, and Exerciſe,
Prone to all Vice, impatient of Reproof,
Proud, careleſs, fond, inconſtant, and profuſe.
Gain and Ambition rule our riper Years,
And make us Slaves to Intereſt and Pow'r.
Old Men are only walking Hoſpitals,
Where all Defects, and all Diſeaſes, crowd
With reſtleſs Pain, and more tormenting Fear,
Lazy, moroſe, full of Delays and Hopes,
Oppreſs'd with Riches which they dare not uſe;
Ill-natur'd Cenſors of the preſent Age,
And fond of all the Follies of the paſt.
Thus all the Treaſure of our flowing Years,
Our Ebb of Life for ever takes away.
Boys muſt not have th' ambitious Care of Men,
Nor Men the weak Anxieties of Age.
Some things are acted, others only told;
But what we hear moves leſs than what we ſee;
Spectators only have their Eyes to truſt,
But Auditors muſt truſt their Ears and you;
Yet there are things improper for a Scene,
Which Men of Judgment only will relate.
Medea *muſt not draw her murth'ring Knife,*
And ſpill her Childrens Blood upon the Stage,
Nor Atreus *there his horrid Feaſt prepare.*
Cadmus *and* Progne's Metamorphoſis,
(*She to a Swallow turn'd, he to a Snake*)
And whatſoever contradicts my Senſe,
I hate to ſee, and never can believe.
Five Acts are the juſt Meaſure of a Play.
Never preſume to make a God appear,
But for a Buſineſs worthy of a God;
And in one Scene no more than three ſhould ſpeak.

I ſhall paſs over what follows on the Chorus, and ſ *Satyrical* Pieces (which were a ſort of *Paſtoral* ys) of which we have ſtill one extant (in the Works

of *Euripides*) becauſe they are both out of Uſe on the Stage in our Times, tho' the Chorus has been reviv'd in *France* by Monſieur *Racine*. And I ſhall conclude *Horace* in the following Lines.

Yet without Writing I may teach to write,
Tell what the Duty of a Poet is;
Wherein his Wealth and Ornaments conſiſt,
And how he may be form'd, and how improv'd,
What fit, what not, what excellent or ill.
Sound Judgment is the ground of Writing well:
And when Philoſophy directs your Choice
To proper Subjects rightly underſtood,
Words from your Pen will naturally flow;
He only gives the proper Characters,
Who knows the Duty of all Ranks of Men,
And what we owe to Country, Parents, Friends,
How Judges, and how Senators ſhould act,
And what becomes a General to do;
Thoſe are the likeſt Copies, which are drawn
By the Original of human Life.
Sometimes in rough and undigeſted Plays
We meet with ſuch a lucky Character,
As being humour'd right, and well purſu'd,
Succeeds much better, than the ſhallow Verſe
And chiming Trifles of more ſtudious Pens.
Greece *had a Genius*, Greece *had Eloquence*,
For her Ambition and her End was Fame, &c.

By theſe Quotations from *Horace* it is plain, that what my Lord Duke of *Buckingham* has ſaid in his *Eſſay* is perfectly juſtify'd, when he ſays.

But to write Plays! why, 'tis a bold Pretence
To Learning, Breeding, Wit, and Eloquence:

For thus muſt a Dramatic Poet be qualified, and those were thoſe of *Greece* qualified; if others who have pre-ſume

ſumed to aſſume that Province have not been ſo, the Effect has been, that they have given us Plays, that do not merit the Name of either *Tragedy* or *Comedy*. He muſt know the differing Cuſtoms and Manners of all Countries, or he will perpetually fall into monſtrous Abſurdities, in which *Fletcher* and his Colegue, *Dryden* in all his Riming Plays at leaſt, and moſt of our *Engliſh* Poets of that kind, have been ſhamefully guilty; for let the Scene be where it will, their Perſons are all *Engliſh*. *Aurengezebe*, ſo much extoll'd for the fine Diction, is every where faulty, not only in this, but in the Manners proper to the Characters he draws; *Marriage Alamode* is plac'd in *Sicily*, but all the People act and talk like *Engliſhmen*; *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* never knew how to diſtinguiſh between a King and a Footman, a Princeſs and an Oiſter-Woman. And *Shakespear* himſelf is too commonly guilty of thoſe Indecencies of Character, which ought always to be avoided by a judicious, and learned Poet.

The *Dramatic* Poet muſt likewiſe know the different Qualities of Men, from Childhood to Age, and the Characters fixt to particular Men, either by Hiſtory or eſtabliſh'd Fiction, or he will perpetually ſin againſt the *Likeneſs*, in repreſenting his Heroes otherwiſe than they are originally repreſented.

He muſt be a perfect Maſter of Moral Philoſophy, and by conſequence know the Nature of the Paſſions, Habits of the Mind, Virtues and Vices, and the like, elſe he can never expreſs them juſtly, and in a Diction or Language proper to each, for that muſt be varied according to the Nature of the Paſſion he expreſſes.

He muſt in ſhort know the Duties and Qualities of all Stations and Ranks of Life, or elſe he will perpetually incur Abſurdities, which muſt depreciate his Work, and diſguſt all Men of fine Taſte; and in this *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* are conſtantly in the wrong.

Suppoſing therefore, that you, or any other, who has a Mind to attempt the Scene, is thus qualified, thus exalted in *Breeding*, *Learning*, *Wit*, and *Eloquence*, I will proceed to lay down theſe Rules for the Compoſition, without obſerving which, there can be nothing great, nothing lovely in the kind produc'd.

I ſhall firſt begin with the Definitions of *Tragedy*.

A Tragedy *is, therefore, an* Imitation *of ſome* one *ſerious, grave and entire* Action, *of a juſt Length, and contain'd within the Unities of Time and Place; and which without Narration, by the Means of* Terror *and* Compaſſion, *purges thoſe Paſſions, and all others which are like them, that is, whoſe Prevalence can throw us into the ſame, or the like Misfortunes.*

As it is the Imitation of *one Action* only, there can be no more properly in any *Tragedy*; for if you paſs thoſe Bounds, there is nothing to hinder you from bringing all the Actions in the World into the ſame Piece, than which nothing can be more ridiculous and abſurd. This you eaſily perceive excludes all Hiſtorical Plays from the Right of being call'd *Tragedies*, which are indeed but ſo many Dialogues wretchedly tack'd together, without Aim and Deſign; ſo that the higheſt Praiſe we can juſtly give our magnified *Shakeſpear*, is only, that he was a great Maſter of Dialogues, but not that of a Tragic Poet.

This leads us to the ſeveral Parts of this *Imitation* which we call *Tragedy*, in which we find ſtill remaining four, that is the *Fable* or *Plot*, the Manners or Characters of the Poetic Perſons, who make this Imitation, the *Sentiments*, that is the Thoughts, proceeding from thoſe Manners, Paſſions, and Habits of the Mind which form the Characters; and the *Diction* or *Language*, which in Words expreſſes thoſe *Sentiments*. For as for the *Decorations* and Muſic made Parts of *Tragedy* by *Ariſtotle*, the Poet has in our Age very little to do; they are the Buſineſs of the Engineer and Muſician, the

both

both ought even now to be a little more under the Direction of the Poet, than at preſent they are.

Of theſe four Parts of *Tragedy*, the *Fable*, or *Plot*, as it is the moſt difficult to ſucceed in, ſo it is incomparably of the moſt Importance, as being ſo neceſſarily eſſential to this Poem, that it cannot ſubſiſt without it, becauſe it is the *Fable* or *Plot* which imitates the *Action*, and the other three Parts are admitted only to make the imitation more lively and agreeable.

But as the *Fable* is the moſt important Part, ſo is the Diction the moſt inconſiderable.

Give me leave, interrupted *Manilia*, to ſay a Word or two on this Head, for on it I think depends the Deciſion of a Controverſy of ſome Conſideration. The *Wits*, and *Great Poets* of this Nation (not to inſiſt on the general Opinion of the *Million*) give the Preheminence to the *Language*, ſetting that in the firſt place which you make ſcarce worthy of the laſt.

Firſt, ſay they, it is evident that none of the *Greek* Poets, who were eminent for the other Parts, were not ſo for the Diction, and Language. When a new Play is acted, and takes, you ſeldom hear any of them tell you of the Excellence of the Plot or *Fable*, but cry out, Oh! what charming Language! How admirably is this Tragedy written! I ſpeak of the Men of Fame and eſtabliſh'd Reputation. I hope you will allow Mr. *Dryden* to be a great Critic, as well as Poet; and he, in more places than one, ſeems to place the Excellence of a Play in the Language, and not in the *Plot*; particularly in a Copy of Verſes of his to Mr. *Southern*, where he has this Line:

So TERENCE *plotted, but ſo* TERENCE *writ:*

by which he plainly gives the Preference to the Language of *Terence*.

What think you of your favourite Judge the preſent Duke of *Buckingham*, in that very *Eſſay* that you and *Gamaliel* have ſo often quoted as the Oracle of *Apollo*

and the Muſes? He ſeems, treating of the *Plot*, to ſpeak with a ſlender Regard to it, when he ſays, *that this alone* has often given Succeſs to Plays: As if he ſhould ſay, that even ſo inconſiderable a Part of Tragedy as the *Plot*, carefully manag'd, has given Succeſs to ſome Plays, which have wanted all thoſe ſublimer Qualities which ſhould ſhine in a fine-written Drama. And indeed, he puts all the value on it only in regard to the ſhare it has in the Succeſs, not real Beauty of a Tragedy.

I could name another Gentleman allow'd by you and almoſt all Men of Taſte and Judgment for his fine Poems, who diſputing on this Point, at moſt, allows the Fable or Plot to be the bare Outlines of a Play; but that the Colouring, and Shades, and Lights, properly diſpos'd, are Proofs of the true Genius of a Tragic Writer; whereas a Mechanic Head is only neceſſary for the Plot.

So that before you proceed in your Directions for the Compoſition, I deſire you would fix where the Excellence of that Compoſition is in Reality; for where-ever that is, that Part, as it is the nobleſt, ſo it is to be the moſt ſtudied by the Poet.

I confeſs (reply'd *Laudon*) I am not ſurpriz'd to hear this from a fair Lady, ſince that Sex has a mighty *Tendre* for *fine Things* and *fine Language*, as they call it; but it is becauſe they ſee few Tragedies on our Stage, which are eminent for the greater and more ſolid Beauties; yet it muſt be own'd they have declar'd for Things of another Nature in ſome; I'll only inſtance their general and ſtill continu'd Approbation of the *Orphan*.

I do allow (fair *Manilia*) that what you have urg'd, is the Opinion of moſt of the *Beaux-Eſprits*, I mean the Men of Wit, nay of ſome Poets who have perform'd very well themſelves in ſome Parts of Poetry. But then you muſt agree with me, that in this they are of the Opinion of the very Scum, and moſt ignorant Part of the *Million*. And I muſt needs declare, I never heard more execrable Cenſures and Judgments paſs'd on the Drama than

than by ſome Gentlemen, who have juſtly gain'd ſome Reputation by their Performances in the leſſer Poetry; from which as they gain'd Authority to their Deciſions, ſo they gain an aſſuming Air to decide in Points with which they are very little acquainted; for as thoſe Qualities we have mention'd from the *Eſſay* are neceſſary to a Writer of Plays, ſo are they in a great degree as neceſſary to paſs a juſt Judgment upon them.

If a young Fellow of the *Univerſity* has ſucceeded in a *Latin* Ode or two, or ſome *Engliſh* Copy of Verſes, he immediately thinks he can ſet up for a Tragic Poet; as if a Drapery-Painter ſhould pretend to decide on the Performance of *Raphael*, *Rubens*, *Le Brun*, &c. Not but a Drapery-Painter may have, by Application, and a Familiarity with the Pieces of the great Maſters, a tolerable Notion of the greater Excellencies of the Art of Painting; but that proceeds not from his Skill in the Drapery, but his Study and Taſte of higher Matters, as any Gentleman and *Lover*, as they call it, may have, without being able to draw a Stroak.

Thus it is with the acknowledg'd *Wits* and great Poets of this Nation which you mention; but there is nothing that more plainly convinces them of Stupidity in this Point, than what you urge, when they inſiſt, that the Thing which is no Part of Poetry, is the principal in the Tragic Way of Writing; for as *Ariſtotle* owns, and Truth confirms, the Language and its Perfection is owing to *Grammar* and *Rhetoric*, and not to *Poetry*.

I am willing to allow Mr. *Dryden* all the Advantages he is capable of juſtly challenging; but certainly *Criticiſm*, I mean juſt *Criticiſm*, was not his Talent, eſpecially in the Drama; for firſt, he contradicts himſelf in his Prefaces, which is a Proof that he was by no means rul'd in his Judgment in that Particular; and next, Dramatic Writing was not his Talent: And therefore I may allow, that it was indeed his Opinion, but not in his later

Age, that the Language was the principal Part of Tra-
gedy, without any Detriment to my Cauſe.

But now you come to the Point by which you think
to triumph, which is, that his Grace of *Buckt* is of the
ſame Opinion. I confeſs I have heard this urg'd before,
but with as little Ground, from his Words, as now. He
ſays, indeed, that a Plot alone has often given Succeſs
to Plays; and *Ariſtotle* ſays the ſame, who certainly no
Man can believe ſhould leſſen the Eſteem of the *Fable*,
which he contends is the principal and moſt eſſential Part
of *Tragedy*. He ſays that a Tragedy may ſucceed well,
may be a perfect Play, if the *Fable* or *Plot* be juſtly
drawn, tho' it be defective in the *Manners*, *Sentiments*
and *Diction*; for the Poets of his Time were defective
in the Manners and Sentiments at leaſt, and yet their
Pieces were ſome of them good, at leaſt could be call'd
Tragedies, when the *Conſtitution of Things*, as he calls
the *Fable*, was juſtly diſpos'd. Which is the ſame
Thing that my Lord Duke ſays. But if you, and thoſe
who draw this falſe Conſequence from his Grace's
Words in this Line, would be ſo juſt as to take the
whole that he ſays on this Head together, they would
find themſelves highly deceiv'd. For he ſays,

Firſt on a Plot employ thy careful Thoughts, &c.

Firſt has here a double Meaning, it ſignifies both in
the firſt place, and *chiefly*; in the *firſt Place*, becauſe
the *Plot* or *Fable* muſt be firſt adjuſted, before you can
proceed; and *chiefly*, becauſe all other things in *Tragedy*
depend on the *Fable* or *Plot*.

As for your other Gentleman of undoubted Merit in
his Performances, his Excellence in his own way, by
no manner of Reaſon, that his Judgment of another
muſt be right, of which perhaps he may know very lit-
tle. But I know the Man, and allow his Performances
excellent, but they are not in the *Drama*.

He ſays, that the *Plot* or *Fable* is but the bare Outlines, which require only a *Mechanic Hand*. But I from hence will prove that the *Plot* or *Fable* is the moſt excellent. He ſays, indeed, that the Colouring, the Shades, and Lights, properly diſpos'd, are the Proofs of a *true Genius* ——

But this is anſwer'd in a few Words. Who is it that draws the Outlines? Why the Maſter-Painter, and Journeymen fill them up with Colours, Shades, and Lights. But ſure there is no Man in his Senſes but wou'd prefer *Verrio*, *Thornhill*, *Raphael*, *Rubens*, *Le Brun*, to any of his Under-Workmen? Look only on the *Sketches* of *Le Brun*'s Paſſions, and you will find nothing but the Outlines, without any Shades; and yet can any one ſee them without being touch'd? Do not the Sketches of a Great Maſter bear a Price, for the mere Excellence of the Deſign? But all the Beauties of Colouring are of no manner of Force or Value without the help of the Outlines. And this was *Ariſtotle*'s Judgment two thouſand Years ago: Of what Conſequence, ſays he, are all the beautiful Lines clapt together in a *Table*, unleſs they are ſet off by the Order and Harmony of the *Figures*?

I know that *De Piles* has endeavour'd, in a ſmall Tract on Colouring, to give it the Preheminence of the other Parts of Painting, but with very little Reaſon. Tho' I muſt allow, that Colouring being a Part of the *Painter's Imitation*, has a better Claim to Excellence, than the *Diction* or *Language* in *Poetry*, which is no Part of the *Imitation*. I know likewiſe that *Ariſtotle* gives this Advantage to the *Colouring* as to bring in the *Manners* and *Sentiments* into it; yet thus fortify'd, he makes it infinitely inferiour to the *Deſign*, *Fable*, or *Plot*.

So that I think you muſt allow that the *Fable* retains all its exalted and principal Station, and is *firſt* and chiefly to be conſider'd, before the *Language*, unleſs you will contend that what is not of *Poetry* is the principal Part of it, which is highly abſurd.

Well (aſſum'd *Tyro*) granting all you have ſaid on this Head, for indeed I can find nothing to anſwer to it, I have yet an Objection to your Definition. I do allow that the *Cant* of fine Language is very trifling, and that thoſe who are fond of it, ſeem not to know what it is, for they call a *ſolemn*, *uniform* way of *Diction*, fine *Language*; whereas that ought to be perpetually vary'd, according to the different Paſſions that are repreſented; ſince that which is *fine* in one Paſſion, would be intolerable in another; as *Horace*, *Boileau*, and his Grace, have obſerv'd. He only therefore can be ſaid to write *fine Language* in a Play, who varies it ſo, as to expreſs the different Paſſions juſtly, and according to their Nature.

But I think that your Rules put the Author under an unneceſſary Difficulty, when you oblige him to the *Unities* of *Action*, *Time*, and *Place*; tho' I own, if you gain the Point of the *Unity* of ACTION, you of Conſequence obtain the other two. By this Severity you deprive the Poet of many beautiful Scenes, which a greater Latitude would furniſh him with. And ſince we are evidently impos'd on in the moſt regular Repreſentation, I ſee no Reaſon but that we may ſtretch the *Deceit* for the Benefit of the Pleaſure. To inſiſt on this *Regularity*, you'd cut off half the charming Scenes of *Shakſpear*, and *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*, and indeed of all who write.

If we muſt take a *Barry* for a *Lucrece*, and a *Goodman* for an *Alexander*, or deſtroy the Repreſentation, I think we may as well admit other Impoſitions that equally advance and enlarge the Pleaſure. If we may ſuppoſe that while we ſit ſtill, our Stage moves from Place to Place tho' the different Places be never ſo contiguous; as for Example, out of one Room into another of the ſame Houſe; we may with equal Probability ſuppoſe the Stage may move twenty, nay a thouſand Miles. In like manner, if we can ſuppoſe that twenty-four Hours paſs while we ſit in the Theatre no more than three or four

I can ſee no reaſon but that we may as well imagine that fifty Years may have paſs'd in the ſame Time; and if fifty, five hundred; for in Impoſſibilities, there are no degrees of more or leſs.

You muſt conſider that *London* is not *Athens*; here we have not Men of ſo fine a Taſte, as to diſreliſh an Entertainment becauſe it is not regular, and preſents us with no Harmony of Parts to compoſe one orderly Whole. What ſignifies a beautiful Proſpect to the Man who cannot ſee farther than the end of his Noſe? If we have ſome fine Scenes, we ſeek no farther, and reſt ſatisfy'd with the obvious and preſent Delight, that comes eaſily to us.

Your Objection (reply'd *Laudon*) is what has been urg'd by more beſides yourſelf. And tho' I think there is but little real Weight in it, yet I will anſwer it. But before we go on thus to take in all the Difficulties againſt the Rules, rais'd by thoſe who are ignorant in the Art, we ſhall ſtretch our Converſation much beyond the Time we can allow.

Be not uneaſie on that Account (ſaid *Tyro*) for after you have anſwer'd this, I ſhall no more interrupt your Directions for forming a complete *Dramatic Piece*; for then indeed you will have fairly remov'd all Remoras to your Procedure, as having eſtabliſh'd your Fundamental Poſition, and fix'd the Excellence of the *Antient Drama* above the *Modern*.

Well then (aſſum'd *Laudon*) I ſhall endeavour to anſwer the Objections you propoſe. Firſt, *Tragedy* is not deſign'd to give you all ſorts of Pleaſure, but only that which naturally flows from its Aim and Deſign. Next, whatever fine Scenes you may imagine a greater Latitude would give your Poet, it is certain they are of a cold and indifferent Nature, and muſt come crudely to the Audience, where they cannot be prepar'd; and even that celebrated Scene of *Brutus* and *Caſſius* labours under this Defect, being brought in to no manner of Purpoſe, and without any Preparation to raiſe the Expecta-

tion

tion of the Audience; whereas that between *Menelaus* and *Agamemnon* in the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of *Euripides*, is admirably prepar'd, and of evident Importance. Nem. there is little Regard to be had to the Complaint of putting the Poet under Difficulties, by requiring his Observation of the *Unities*; for to arrive at the Perfection of any Art, much Labour and Application is requir'd; and here he is oblig'd to nothing but what is essentially necessary to the Art.

The Painters may as justly make the same Complaint, who are all under the same Confinement, that is, the Imitation of one Action only in one Piece. Thus the passing the *Granic*, the Battles of *Porus*, of *Constantine*, the Tent of *Darius*, the *Last Judgment* of *Michael Angelo*, and all the Pieces of *Le Brun*, *Rubens*, *Raphael*, and the rest, are but of one Action.

But who is it complains? Why Pretenders, not Masters, those who would meddle with what they understand not, have no Genius for, not Artists. I am speaking of an Art which always proposes to arrive at a certain End by certain Means; but as the Dialogue-Writers propose no certain End, so by consequence they can know no certain Means.

Now *Tragedy* in its very Constitution proposes to imitate some one grave, serious, and important Action, to move *Terror* and *Compassion*; and therefore to obtain this End, makes use of certain Means.

Next, you are highly deceiv'd to think that there is the least Imposition on your Understanding, or on Truth, in the *Tragic* Representation, for that is absolutely false. Who ever that went to see a Play imagin'd that he must suppose *Barry* a *Lucrece*, or *Goodman* an *Alexander*? No, we go to see the Picture of some Action either of *Alexander*, *Achilles*, *Lucrece*, or others represented by the Actors. Who supposes that the Figures in *Le Brun*'s Tent of *Darius*, are either *Alexander*, *Hephestion*, *Sisigambis*, or *Statira*, or that they are really like their Persons, of which we know nothing? but we view

that

hat Piece, or any other (I mention that, becauſe known y the Cuts common enough in every Parlour or Cloſet) o ſee ſuch an Action in Hiſtory, or Fable finely repre- ented by Figures admirably deſign'd and drawn. The ame holds good in the *Dramatic* Picture.

But you ſay farther, that if we can ſuppoſe a Stage efore us moving from place to place while we ſit ſtill, we may as juſtly ſuppoſe it to travel five hundred Miles, s to paſs from one Room into another, tho' in the ſame Houſe. I grant it, and therefore all that can be drawn from your Objection is, that there is a neceſſity that the *Unity of Place* be preſerv'd, to avoid ſhocking your Reaſon. For indeed, if you once paſs the Bounds of *Truth* and *Probability*, I ſee not where you can ſtop, nd why you ſhould ſtop any where. But, Sir, the Antients never were guilty of this Abſurdity, but the Place where your Play open'd, continu'd to the conclu- ſion of your *Fable*.

The ſame thing may be ſaid of the Unity of Time; nd what you obſerve is certainly true, you may as well extend it to 500, nay 5000 Years, as to 24 Hours. But of this I ſhall ſay ſomething under the Head of the *Unity of Time*.

You conclude, that I muſt conſider that *London* is not *Athens*, &c. I confeſs, our Taſte is generally aban- don'd in this particular Art; but *Athens* itſelf follow'd the Compoſitions of *Theſpis* and others near as irregular as our Plays; and yet when *Æſchylus*, *Sophocles*, *Euri- pides*, and others, had reform'd the Stage, and brought it, by the Aſſiſtance of the Magiſtrate, to a more ratio- nal and uſeful Diverſion, the *Athenians* ſoon acknow- ledg'd the Excellence. The *French* Stage was before the time of *Corneille*, and the Care and Influence of that great Stateſman Cardinal *Richlieu*, as abſurd as thoſe of *Spain* and *England*, but ſoon took the Advantage of Improvements, introduc'd by ſo juſt a Regularity as now reigns on it.

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If I may not be allow'd to compare my Countrymen to the *Athenians*, the Poliſhers of half Humane Kind; yet I preſume I may hope as much from their good Senſe as from the *French*, unleſs you will grant that we are as much inferiour to them in Wit and Reaſon, and the Force of the Mind, as ſuperiour to them in Bravery, Courage, and the Force of the Body. But I am too much an *Engliſhman* to give them ſo valuable an Advantage over us.

Having thus anſwer'd your Objections, I ſhall proceed to the Diſcovery of the Rules of this noble Art by obſerving which, a Man of *Genius* cannot fail of writing a *Tragedy* that ſhall pleaſe as well the Ignorant as the Learned. But you muſt conſider that I am delivering, not defending the Art in every Particular; that is too tedious a Task for our Converſation; and ſince it is admirably done already by Monſieur *Dacier*, in his excellent Notes on *Ariſtotle*'s *Poetics*, which Book is in *Engliſh*, I refer thoſe to it who have a Mind to hear a Defence of this Divine Art. What I have done here is a Work of perfect Supererogation.

Having thus prov'd that the *Fable*, Plot, or, as *Ariſtotle* calls it, the *Conſtitution* of the *Subject*, is the firſt principal, and moſt important Part of *Tragedy*, I will endeavour to lay down ſuch Rules as, follow'd, will make it perfect; and which, perfectly underſtood, will render the Work more eaſie to the Poet.

I have told you that a *Tragedy* is the Imitation of an *Action* perfect and entire, and of a juſt Extent or Length. That *Action* is entire, that has a *Beginning*, *Middle*, and *End*. The Beginning is that which ſuppoſes nothing to be neceſſarily before it, but requires ſomething to come after it; the End, on the contrary, neceſſarily ſuppoſes ſome thing before it, but nothing to follow it; the Middle ſuppoſes ſomething gone before, and likewiſe ſomething to come after it. The Poet therefore cannot begin, nor end his Subject where he pleaſes, but muſt begin where the *Action* he propoſes to imitate

mitate begins, and end it where the *Action* is perfectly over.

All that can be ſaid of the juſt Extent or Meaſure of Tragedy, is, that it takes up juſt ſo much Time, as it muſt neceſſarily or probably do, to induce rightly all the Incidents, till the unravelling of the Plot ſhows the good or ill Fortune of the principal Perſons; and in Time ſhould not exceed the Repreſentation.

But why, you may ſay, do I confine the *Poet* to four Hours, when *Ariſtotle* himſelf, according to the very ſtrict-eſt meaning of his Words, allows eight or ten Hours? I anſwer, that I follow the conſtant Practice of thoſe *Greek Poets*, whoſe Works, or ſome of whoſe Works yet remain, who obſerved this Rule inviolably, and they were the Foundation on which *Ariſtotle* built his Poetics; and tho' *Euripides*, in his SUPPLIANTS, has by a too ſtrict adhering to this Rule incurr'd ſome Abſurdity, yet *Sophocles* never has, and certainly to obtain that Perfection, which every Artiſt ought to aim at, the Poet ſhould never exceed in his Action the Time of the Repreſentation. 'Tis true, 'tis difficult, but ſo is *Perfection* in every other Art. Tho' it be allow'd that *Ariſtotle*, in Complaiſance to the Weakneſs of the Poets of his Time, who in all probability began to deviate from the ſtrict Rules of the *Drama*, and ſo by degrees to loſe the Excellence of their Predeceſſors, who were more ſevere Obſervers of the Rules; if, I ſay, *Ariſtotle* gave a larger Time to the Action of Tragedy, he always ſuppoſes the Poet ſhall take care that the Time which his Action takes up more than that of the Repreſentation, ſhould be caſt into the Intervals of the Acts, becauſe that Deception is not ſo obvious, and eaſily obſerv'd by the Audience, as hap'ning out of ſight. Yet ſince the Poet is Maſter of his Subject, and entirely free in his Choice of it, he ought rather to chuſe or invent ſuch *Actions* for his Dramatic Imitation, as may be more juſt, and more according to the niceſt Rules of Art. That this may be done is plain and evi-

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dent from the *Ajax*, the *Electra*, both the *Oedipus's*, *Antigone*, and the reſt of the Tragedies of *Sophocles* which yet remain.

But to proceed — The Subject or Action of a Tragedy ought to be *one*, and not all the Actions of one Hero, as almoſt all our *Engliſh* Tragic Writers have choſen, falſely ſuppoſing (if they indeed had any Thought of this Unity at all) that this would reach the Unity demanded: For that is by means ſufficient to conſtitute that UNITY, which is abſolutely requir'd in a good and juſt Tragedy. For we may with as much Truth call all the Actions that happen in one Age or Nation, or in the whole World *one*, as all the different Actions of any *one Man*. *Homer* in the Narrative Poetry, and *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and the other *Greek* Tragic Poets, never offend in this Point.

For as in all other *Imitations*, what is imitated, is *one*, (as particularly we have ſeen in Painting) ſo it is in Tragedy; ſince the Fable is the Imitation of an *Action*, that Action muſt be *one* and entire; and whoſe different Parts are link'd together, that if you tranſpoſe them, or take out ly one away, the whole will be entirely chang'd or deſtroy'd. For whatever can be added or left out, without cauſing a ſenſible Change, cannot be a *Part* of the *Action*.

But I have already ſaid ſo much on the Unities of Time, Action and Place, that there is no need of dwelling any longer on thoſe Points. If I have repeated any thing in Explication and Defence of them, their Importance in the Tragic Performance will make a ſufficient Excuſe.

In the next Place, which indeed ſeems a ſort of Conſequence of what I have ſaid, it is not the Poet's Buſineſs to relate Things juſt as they came to paſs, but as they might or ought neceſſarily or probably to happen. For the Difference between a *Poet* and an *Hiſtorian*, is not that the former writes in Verſe, and the latter in Proſe; for were my Lord *Clarendon's* Hiſtory put into Verſe, it wou'd be ſtill an *Hiſtory*, and *Spenſer* put into Proſe

he *Fairy Queen* would notwithſtanding be a *Poem*: But the real Difference is, that the Hiſtorian is oblig'd o ſet down Things as they really come to paſs; but the oet, as I have ſaid, as they might or ought to happen. nd this makes Poetry infinitely more Grave and Moral han Hiſtory, that dealing in *Generals*, this in *Particu-rs*; a *General* Thing is that which every Man of ſuch r ſuch a Character neceſſarily or probably ought to do r ſay, which is always the juſt and uſeful Aim of Poeſy, v'n when it impoſes true Names on the Perſons it in-roduces. A *Particular* Thing is for Example, what ny particular Perſon, as ſuppoſe *Alcibiades* has done or ffer'd, or ſaid. And it is for this Reaſon (ſays *Ariſtotle*) hat *Poetry* is more Solid and Moral than *Hiſtory*.

That the *Philoſopher* and *Critic* gives this advantage o Poeſy, will appear more juſt from this Conſidera-ion, that Hiſtory can inſtruct no farther, than the acts it relates give an opportunity; and as thoſe acts are *Particular*, it very rarely happens, that they re ſuitable to thoſe, who read them, and that here is not one of a thouſand to whom they agree; nd thoſe to whom they do agree, have not per-aps in all their Lives two Occaſions, on which they an draw any Advantage from what they have read. It not ſo with Poetry, that keeps cloſe to *Generals*, and is ſo much the more Inſtructive and Moral, as General hings ſurpaſs Particulars. Beſides it is not the Fact hat inſtructs, but the Cauſes of thoſe Facts. But thoſe are enerally, if not always kept ſecret in the Breaſts of Monarchs, Stateſmen, and other firſt Movers of them: But the Poet being Maſter of his Matter advances othing for which he does not give a very good Rea-on; nor is there ſo much as a ſmall Incident, of which e lays not open the Cauſes and Effects.

Thirdly, Hiſtory only employs a bare *Narration*, *Poe-y* makes uſe of *Action*, becauſe it is an Imitation of ne; and every thing is animated in *Tragedy*; now what s only related, or barely told to be underſtood, affects us much

much leſs, than what we ſee with our Eyes. Fourthly *Hiſtory* is cold, and as I may ſay ſolitary; whereas Poetry joins Philoſophy, Theology its ſelf, and makes advantage of the Paſſions.

This is ſufficient to ſhow that the Action imitated by *Tragedy* muſt be general, and not particular, and that it notwithſtanding the Impoſition of true Names on ſome of the Dramatic Perſons, which ſome Poets have done to give their Fable the Air and Authority of *Truth*, by uſing known Names, yet that Influence is but narrow ſince in an Audience there are few ſo well acquainted with Hiſtory, as to diſtinguiſh between the real and feign'd Names that a Poet makes uſe of; but the Fable touches equally the Ignorant and the Knowing, and therefore both the Modern and Antient Poets have often been equally the Authors of the Names, and the *Fable*.

Hence it is apparent, that the Poet ought to be the Author of his Subject, as much as of his Verſe, eſpecially ſince he imitates Actions, and is a Poet only by *Imitation*. He has the ſame Right to this Name, when he preſents us with true *Incidents*, provided that theſe true *Incidents* have the Poetic Qualities of Veriſimilitude and that Poſſibility which is requir'd by the Art, which indeed are very rare; and therefore a Fable wholly fictitious will generally be more Poetic, as well as more eaſily adapted to Nature and Art, than any that Hiſtory does afford.

I muſt here admoniſh the Poet of one groſs Error which moſt, if not all of our *Engliſh* Dramatic Writers have been guilty of, and that is, of the *under Plots* as they call them, which ſeldom or never are of a Piece with, and ſo link'd to the main Deſign, as not to make the Action double, and ſo deſtroys that Unity, without which a juſt Tragedy cannot ſubſiſt; and this is plain from this, that you may cut off the under Plots from our Plays without the leaſt maiming of the Subject. Beſides, by introducing an under Plot, you diſtract the Attention of the Audience, and very often engage them

a greater Concern for the Perſons of that, than for thoſe of the principal Deſign. The Writers, who have been guilty of this Practice, very weakly pretend, that a Play without an under Plot is too naked, too thin, to give a full Entertainment to the Audience; if that be ever true, it is becauſe the Poet is too ignorant of Art and Nature to give a ſingle Plot thoſe Beauties, and thoſe Paſſions, and Incidents, that ſhould render it agreeable, nay tranſporting. But we have ſufficient Proof even here of the Falſity of this Aſſertion, ſince we find that thoſe few which have no under Plot have taken more, and are much more laſting than the contrary. I need only inſtance in *All for Love*, *The Orphan*, and *Venice preſerv'd*. 'Tis true indeed, that in the laſt there is a miſerable Farce *under Plot*; but then you muſt remember, that this Farce has been left out for many Years.

In the next Place, I deſire that you would remember that *Tragedy* is the Imitation, not only of an entire *Action*, but of ſuch an Action, as moves *Terror* and *Compaſſion*; for if it excites any other Paſſion, it is not according to our Definition, and contrary to the Deſign of *Tragedy*; for it is certain that there can be no *Tragedy*, where *Fear* and *Pity* are not excited. And therefore all thoſe Plays (for I will not call them *Tragedies*) which aim only at the raiſing *Admiration*, are excluded by *Ariſtotle* and Reaſon; for that way of refining the Paſſions by Admiration (which *Corneille* in *France*, and ſeveral in *England* have attempted) is not at all the Deſign of juſt *Tragedy*; for that Paſſion is too ſoft for ſuch a great Effect. *Tragedy* only employs *Terror* and *Compaſſion*, and leaves *Admiration* to the *Epic* or *Narrative* Poem, to which it is more neceſſary and proper, and where it has more time to act on Habitudes and Manners. Not but that the Tragic Poet makes uſe of *Joy*, *Love*, *Hope*, *Anger*, *Hatred* [illegible] then it is in order from their Operation to pro[illegible] the Aim of Tragedy, *Fear* and *Pity*. Thus if the [illegible]ntlemen would mean by *Admiration*, the Great, the Marvellous, and the Won-

Wonderful of the Tragic Incidents, we ſhall eaſily al-
low that Paſſion a Place in this Poem.

Now theſe two Paſſions of *Fear* and *Pity*, ſays *Ariſ-
totle*, come by ſurprize, when ſome things are produc'
by others contrary to our Expectations, as in the *Oedi-
pus* of *Sophocles* (now to be ſeen in *Engliſh*) where th
Corinthian Meſſage, which ſeems to promiſe an End o
the Fears of that Prince, quite contrary to our Expecta-
tions, makes him entirely unhappy; but it is not ever
Accident that ſurprizes that is Tragical. For Example, th
falling of a Houſe may cruſh a Man to Death, or the killing
Man by the random caſt of a Stone; the ſurprize that ſuc
Accidents cauſe is by no means proper to refine the Paſ-
ſions; becauſe there being no ſenſible Cauſe that pro-
duc'd them, we impute them to blind chance, no
know how to make any Application of them. But th
Surprize that *Tragedy* requires, is that which ſhows ſe-
veral Incidents, which are produc'd of one another
contrary to the Expectation of the Audience. For th
Marvellous or *Wonderful* is much more evident i
theſe, than in ſuch as happen without Deſign and b
Chance; becauſe theſe Accidents are purely fortuitous
have not the *Marvellous* or *Wonderful*, which w
find in thoſe that are produc'd by foregoing Incidents
For there is nothing very wonderful in a Man's bein
kill'd by the fall of a Houſe, the Spectator's Mind ſearche
not into a Cauſe which is hid in the Breaſt of Provi-
dence, and has no other Concern for him, than wha
common Humanity obliges him to. But when any Sur-
prize comes from thoſe things which are produc'd by on
another, this certainly has the Wonderful requir'd t
Tragedy; for the Spirit of the Audience is ſtricken an
filled with the Object, he ſees at the ſame Time it
Cauſes and Effects, and 'tis from this double Proſpect
that the Wonderful is produc'd. Not but there are
Accidents which are the Effects of Fortune, which ye
ſeem to be conducted with the Deſign of a particular
Providence, as in the Fall of the Statue of *Mitys* on hi
Mur-

Murderer, inſtanc'd by *Ariſtotle*. This *Mitys* was an *Argian*, and kill'd in a Tumult, at a Public Solemnity, his Brazen Statue fell on his Murderer and ſlew him; tho' the Fall might be by Accident, and that it would have fal'n if he had not been under it; yet the Spectator who joins the Cauſe and the Effect together, is eaſily perſuaded that it was done deſignedly, that is, by a Judgment from the Gods or Providence. There are many Accidents of the like Nature to be met with in Hiſtory. Thus in a Modern Play call'd *Lucius* or *The firſt Chriſtian King of Britain*, *Lucius* intending to kill the Raviſher of his Miſtreſs, kills his ſuppos'd Father, yet in the midſt of his Terror, finds that he has kill'd his Father's Murderer, and not his Father.

But ſays *Dacier*, a ſcruple may here ariſe, and that very remarkable, and that is to know whether the Poets ſhould endeavour to make their Surprizes by Incidents, which have nothing of Chance in them, and which naturally proceed one from another, or whether they ſhould try to produce this Surprize by Accidents which may ſeem to happen deſignedly, and yet may be imputed to Chance or Fortune? I ſhould (ſays he) declare myſelf for the latter, for that ſeems to me much more Wonderful than the former, and it is for this Reaſon that OEDIPUS is the beſt Subject for *Tragedy* that ever was. For whatever happen'd to that unhappy Prince, as this Character, 'tis manag'd by Fortune, but every Body may ſee, that all the Accidents have their Cauſes, and fall out according to the Deſign of a particular Providence. But with Monſieur *Dacier*'s Pardon, ſince *Ariſtotle* has not decided in his Favour, I am of Opinion, that the Incidents produc'd by one another, is as the leſs difficult, ſo the more beautiful. However this is left entirely in the Breaſt of the Poet, ſince both diſcover a peculiar and happy Maſtery in the Art.

The *Fables* or *Plots* of a *Tragedy* are divided into two Sorts, *viz.* *Simple* and *Compounded*, for ſo are the Actions which the Fables imitate. The *Simple* are thoſe

Actions

Actions which are united and continue to the End without any Change of Fortune or Discovery in the principal Persons. Of this kind in the *English* Tongue is *Cato*; for there from the Beginning *Cato* is in Distress. and the Play ends with his Death, without any Change of Fortune at all; the *Ajax* of *Sophocles* is of the same kind; but I cannot, with Monsieur *Dacier*, put the *Antigone* of the same Poet into the Number; for there is a very great Change in the Fortune of *Creon*, as well as of *Antigone*, and that produc'd especially in the Part of *Creon*, by all the foregoing Incidents, from the very beginning of the *Tragedy*. There is indeed no Discovery, but the want of that does not make it of the simple Kind. For the *Compounded* Fable is distinguish'd from the former, by having either a *Change of Fortune* in the principal Persons, or by a *Discovery*, or by both; the latter is the most beautiful, and of this kind is the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Mr. *Dennis*, and his *Liberty asserted*; in both which the Discovery makes a Change of Fortune, from Misery to Happiness.

In both these sorts of *Fables*, all ought to proceed from the very Constitution of the Subject, in such a Manner, as that what precedes them, should produce the rest either necessarily or probably. For there is a very great difference betwixt Incidents which arise one from another, and those which only come one after another. For as *Dacier* justly and appositely observes, the latter are like Numbers which subsist by themselves, independent of those which went before, the first neither induces the second, nor the second the third, *&c.* but those Incidents which arise from one another, are as Parts of the same Body, which cou'd no longer subsist, should we take away or change one Part only: For that would dissolve the Connection, and break the Continuity.

This Change of one Fortune into another, that is from good to bad, or from bad to good, ought to fall out contrary to expectation, either necessarily or probably

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ably. As in the *Oedipus* of *Sophocles*; for he, who omes to tell him agreeable News, and which ought to eliver him from thoſe Fears into which his Apprehenon of committing Inceſt with his Mother had thrown im, does the quite contrary, in telling him plainly what is, and putting his doubted Birth beyond any doubt; d ſhowing him that he is both a Parricide, and an ceſtuous Perſon. *Ariſtotle* gives yet another Inſtance this kind from the *Lynceus* of *Theodectes* an *Athenian* oet, which I ſhall mention tho' the Tragedy is periſh'd, e Philoſopher's Account of it being ſufficient for our urpoſe: *Lynceus*, who was led to die, and *Danaus* his ather in Law following to offer him in Sacrifice, both ang'd their Fortune; for by a Series of Incidents it me to paſs that *Danaus* ſuffer'd the Death that was epar'd for *Lynceus*, and the latter was ſav'd. Thus in e *Iphigenia* of Mr. *Dennis*, the Queen thinking to ſaſy *Oreſtes* and *Pilades* that the Goddeſs *Diana* deanded her Death, diſcovers her to be the Daughter of *gamemnon*, and had by the Art of the Father and Moer eſcap'd that Fate, tho' ſhe had been demanded by at Goddeſs at *Aulis*. This made *Oreſtes* find that the rieſteſs was his Siſter *Iphigenia*, which remov'd the Bar the Queen's Love of that Prince, and fixes the Happeſs of the whole Company, that is, of ev'ry one of e Principal Characters which entirely depended upon it.

The *Diſcovery* in this Place does not mean a ſimple ding out any thing, that is not known, but a Paſſage m the Ignorance of a thing to a Knowledge of it, d which is attended with a Remembrance, as the *Greek* ord imports, as will be plainer from *Ariſtotle's* Defiion of it, and what follows; a *Diſcovery* therefore is Change, which cauſing us to paſs from Ignorance to owledge, produces either *Hatred* or *Love* in thoſe om the Poet has a Deſign to render either happy or erable.

The beſt *Diſcovery* is that which is followed immedily or accompany'd with the Change of the Fortune

of the Principal Perſons, as it is in the *Oedipus*. There are indeed many other *Diſcoveries*, as by inanimate Things, and ſuch as are moſt common. We may likewiſe by a Diſcovery come to remember what any Perſon has done or not done; theſe us'd with Judgment, and to produce the more important, are not contemptible; but the other is the moſt proper for *Fable* and Action: For that Diſcovery, accompanied with the Change of Fortune requir'd, will infallibly produce either Compaſſion or Terror, of which Tragedy is an Imitation, as is laid down for a Fundamental; it will alſo produce the good or ill Fortune of the Principal Perſons.

Since therefore the *Diſcovery* includes the Remembrance of certain Perſons, it muſt be either ſingle or double. The ſingle is when one Perſon is remember'd by one whom he knows; as *Oedipus* is remember'd by *Jocaſta*, whom he knew: The *Double*, when two Perſons who know not, do yet come to remember by certain Circumſtances each other, as in the *Iphigenia* in *Taurus* of *Euripides*, where *Iphigenia* is diſcover'd to *Oreſtes* by a Letter which ſhe gave him to carry into *Greece* and of which ſhe had told him the Contents, that if the Letter ſhou'd chance to be loſt, he might deliver what ſhe had written by Word of Mouth, which diſcovered her to *Oreſtes* to be his Siſter *Iphigenia*; on the other Hand, at the ſame time he is diſcover'd to her by certain Preſents which ſhe made him. In the *Electra* of *Sophocles*, the Diſcovery is likewiſe double, for *Electra* is firſt made known to *Oreſtes*, and he afterwards to her.

Beſides theſe Parts of the Fable which regard the Subject, there is yet another which *Ariſtotle* calls the *Paſſion*, that is, the *Sufferings*, which he explains to be an Action or Incident which deſtroys ſome Perſon, or cauſes ſome violent Pain, as an evident and certain Death, Torments, Wounds, or the like. And tho' theſe muſt never be given on the Stage, yet a Perſon may come and die there, or give evident Marks of his Suffering

without expoſing the Atrocity of the Fact itſelf to the Audience.

Thoſe Sufferings, juſt mention'd, naturally bring me to thoſe who are in a *Tragedy* to ſuffer; that is, leads me to ſhow what are the proper Characters for *Tragedy*. But a great help to this, will be for the Poet to keep always in his Mind the Definition already given of a Tragical Action, that is, that it is ever to be ſuch as shall raiſe Fear and Pity.

Since therefore, Tragedy, to have all the Beauties of which it is capable, ought to be *compounded*, and not *ſimple*; and that as I have often ſaid, it ought to excite *Terror* and *Compaſſion*, which is the Property of this ſort of Imitation, it neceſſarily follows that we ought not to chooſe a Character of a perfectly good Man, to make him fall from Proſperity into Adverſity; for by that, inſtead of *Fear* and *Pity*, we ſhou'd give Horror, which is deteſted by all.

It is equally evident that he ought not to take an ill Man, to make him from miſerable happy, and eaſy; for there is nothing leſs Tragical, ſince in that we find not any of the Effects of *Tragedy*; for beſides its not moving either Terror or Compaſſion, it affords us not the leaſt Pleaſure. Nor ought the Poet to entertain us with the Misfortunes of a very wicked Perſon; for tho' 'tis certain that ſuch a Repreſentation may afford ſome ſort of ſatisfaction, yet it cannot move either *Fear* or *Pity*; for the firſt is produced by thoſe, who are like themſelves, and the latter by the Miſeries of ſuch who deſerve better luck, ſince it appears that the Puniſhment of the wicked is neither terrible nor pityful.

There remains therefore only that Character, which is between theſe two, and which being neither ſuperlatively *good* or *bad*, does not draw his Misfortunes on himſelf by his Wickedneſs or his Crimes. Let him therefore chooſe his Principal Perſon from among thoſe who are of eminent Quality, and great Reputation, one who is become miſerable by ſome *involuntary Fault*, that is, by

ſome Fault which immediately proceeds from his yield-ing to a violent Paſſion, as *Oedipus*, and *Thyeſtes*, and the like. I muſt here adverti ſe the Reader, that it is not neceſſary that this Perſon be a King, as *Oedipus* was; but he muſt be at leaſt a Nobleman or a Perſon of high Station. 'Tis true, that in all the *Greek* Tragedies, the Principal Perſons are Kings: But then firſt we muſt re-member, that they were but Petty Monarchs, and ſcarce attended with the Magnificence of our Noblemen. Next it is plain by the Orphan of *Otway*, that this latter is fully as moving, and affecting of the Audience.

Hence it neceſſarily follows, that a Fable that is well and artfully compos'd, ought to be *ſingle*, and not *double*; that it ought rather to end with the *ill* than *good* Fortune of the *Principal Perſons*, provided that Unhappineſs be the Effect or Conſequence of ſome great Fault, and not of a remarkable or ſcandalous Crime. In ſhort, it ought to be the Misfortunes of a Man neither *bad* nor *good*. The fineſt *Tragedy* therefore is, that which is according to the Rules of Art, in which this Conduct muſt be obſerv'd.

'Tis for this reaſon (ſays *Ariſtotle*) thoſe who blame *Euripides* for following theſe Maxims in his Tragedies, and that moſt of his Piecces have an unfortunate End, are very much deceiv'd, ſince that Conduct of his is perfectly good, and thus he was the moſt tragical of all the Poets.

As for that Fable which has a double End, one fortunate for the good, and unhappy for the wicked, though it may afford ſome ſort of Pleaſure, yields not that which is proper to Tragedy; it may do well in Comedy, where the greateſt Enemies go off good Friends without one Scratch, or the leaſt Bloodſhed. It is alſo allowable in the Narrative Poem, as in the *Odyſſes* of *Homer*, and the *Æneis* of *Virgil*.

The Terrible, and Pitiful in Tragedy, muſt be produc'd by the Series of Incidents, for that is a Maſterſtroke. Becauſe the Fable muſt be compos'd in ſuch

Man

Manner, that tho' the whole Fact is not ſet before the Eyes of the Spectators, they ſhall tremble and be touch'd in the moſt ſenſible degree by the Recital of them, and feel the ſame Compaſſion and Terror, which none can hinder themſelves from feeling at the Tragedy of *Oedipus*. But to endeavour to excite theſe Paſſions by the Sight, that is, by the Means of the Scenes and Properties (as they call them) is what the Poet has no concern with, ſince it more depends on thoſe who take care of the Decorations. Thus in that wretched Play of *Titus Andronicus*, by the cutting off the Hands, and maiming *Lavinia*, and the *bloody Heads*, &c. the Writer hop'd to obtain this Effect, and yet fail'd, for ſuch ſhocking Sights diſguſt a curious and humane Spectator.

But to come to the Incidents that are the moſt productive of Terror and Compaſſion, and by conſequence are the moſt fit for *Tragedy*. Whatever happens, is either between *Friends* or *Enemies*, or indifferent Perſons. An Enemy, who either kills, or is kill'd by his Enemy, excites no other Pity, than what proceeds from the Evil itſelf. It is the ſame with indifferent Perſons, who kill one another; but when ſuch a Misfortune happens among Friends or Relations, as when one Brother kills or is kill'd by another, or a Father or Mother their Son, or the Son the Father or Mother, or do any ſuch like thing, theſe are Incidents that the Tragic Poet ſhou'd endeavour to ſeek after or feign.

Theſe Incidents are more or leſs artful and ſhining, as they are judiciouſly manag'd, elſe they loſe all their Beauty. Theſe Actions may be repreſented, as done by thoſe who act with a full and entire Knowledge of what they do, as *Medea* in *Euripides* kill'd her Children, tho' at the ſame time ſhe knew them to be ſo. Others may be repreſented, who do not know the Heinouſneſs of the Action which they commit, and who, after it is done, come to know the Relation and Friendſhip between them, and thoſe on whom they were ſo ſeverely reveng'd. Thus *Oedipus* knew not that *Laius* was his

Father when he kill'd him, tho' that indeed does not happen in the Action of that Tragedy. But we see (says *Ariſtotle*) the Death of *Eriphyle* by her Son *Alcmeon*, and the wounding of *Ulyſſes* by *Telegonus* in the Body of thoſe two Tragedies. Now neither *Alcmeon* nor *Telegonus* knew their Relation to the Perſons they kil-led or wounded. The manner of the Ignorance of *Alcmeon* is not left us; but the Caſe of *Telegonus* is this: He was the Son of *Ulyſſes* by *Circe*, and being grown up, had a mind to go and find his Father; being arriv'd and landed on the Iſland of *Ithaca*, he took ſome Sheep to feed his Retinue; the Shepherds put themſelves into a Poſture of Reſcue, and *Ulyſſes* comes with his Son *Telemachus* to repel the Inſult of the Stranger; but *Telegonus* in his own Defence wounds *Ulyſſes*, not knowing who he was.

Or laſtly, the Perſon who is going to do this Crime, may be prevented by coming to the knowledge of the Relation betwixt him and the other, whom he is going to wound or kill.

The firſt Manner has ſomething too horrible, and not fit for *Tragedy*, tho' it has been by both Antients and Moderns made uſe of.

The ſecond Manner is preferable to this, I mean, when he who commits the Crime commits it ignorantly, but comes to a Knowledge of it after it is done. For then the Action has nothing in it that is flagitious, or barbarous and inhuman, and the Diſcovery of the Relation till then unknown is extreamly moving.

The third is very beautiful, and preferable to the ſecond in Tragedies that have a double Concluſion or End; but the ſecond is beyond Controverſy the fineſt for thoſe which end unfortunately, which we have eſtabliſh'd as the beſt. But the *Third*, if well manag'd, affords an abundance of Pleaſure; but the Poet muſt ſo contrive it, that the Audience know from the Beginning, the nearneſs of the Relation between the two Perſons, that are like to do or ſuffer ſo ſevere a Fate. In this the Antients had the better of us in their Sto-

ries,

ries, ſince the Audience all along knew that *Oreſtes* was the Brother of *Iphigenia*, who is to offer him in Sacrifice, tho' he and ſhe know not one another till the *Diſcovery*, which makes them both happy, and delivers her from doing ſo cruel a Fact. The ſame may be ſaid of *Merone* and others in their Plays, for then Fear and Pity agitated the Audience through the whole Piece.

This is ſufficient to ſay of the Conſtitution of the Subject at preſent, till I have ſaid a few Words on the Manners (as *Ariſtotle* has done) for what elſe is to come has a Dependance on the Knowledge of the Manners.

The Manners are Habits, Qualities or Paſſions of the Mind, which influence our Actions, and indeed generally, if not always produce them. In the Poetical Draught of theſe, there are four things to be obſerv'd; the firſt and moſt important is, that they be *good*, I mean not *virtuous*, but well and fully mark'd; for the Manners of an ill or vicious Man may be poetically *good*, that is, well mark'd or plainly expreſs'd. For we know there are *Manners* in a Diſcourſe or an *Action*, when they make known the Inclination or Reſolution, whatever it be, bad if bad, and good if good.

The ſecond thing to be obſerv'd in our Draught of the *Manners* is, that they be *agreeable*; thus *Valour* is properly a moral Virtue, but it is extremely diſagreeable to a *Woman*, for that Sex ought neither to be *Bold*, nor *Valiant*. *Chaſtity* is agreeable to Woman, and that Poet who robs the Sex of it in any Character fit for Tragedy, gives *Manners* to them, which are diſagreeable, and ſo offend againſt this Rule.

The third Thing to be obſerv'd in the *Manners*, is, that they be *like*. This third Quality is only for known Characters, for 'tis from the Story that this Likeneſs muſt be drawn, for we muſt deſcribe them as we find them there. If we find ſuch a Character in Hiſtory, as a covetous Emperor, as the Emperor *Mauritus*, to repreſent him Generous, wou'd be to ſin againſt this

Likeneſs of the *Manners* here requir'd; and yet to give him that Avarice which Hiſtory has done, would be to ſin againſt the *Agreeableneſs* of the *Manners*, ſince there is no Quality ſo unroyal as Avarice. If therefore we make uſe of this Character in a *Tragedy*, as Monſieur *Corneille* has done, we muſt like him ſink or ſlur over his Covetouſneſs, without giving him the contrary Virtue of Liberality. Hence I hope it is plain, how the *Likeneſs* of the *Manners* differs from the *Agreeableneſs*.

The fourth Condition of the Manners is, that they be *equal*, that is, that they be the ſame in each Character through the whole Play; elſe they can be of no Uſe, ſince they cannot prepare us for the Reſolution, which that Character may take, or the Actions he may do. But ſince in Nature, there are Characters which are *unequal*, to preſerve the *Likeneſs*, we muſt keep to the *Original*, and make them equally *unequal*. Yet after all, it is my Opinion, that theſe *unequal Originals* had better be left, than made uſe of, ſince they ſeem more agreeable to Comedy, as being ſomething Humorous; beſides if the *Unity* of Time be ſtrictly obſerv'd, there is but little Scope for the ſhowing of this Inequality. At leaſt I can ſee no great Advantage to the Poet in making choice of ſuch a changeable Character; I do not find by our *Engliſh Tragedies*, that any one of them, which has taken its Riſe from Hiſtorical Characters and Actions, are comparable to thoſe which are only built on *Fiction*; as the *Orphan*, and (with ſome Allowance) *Venice preſerv'd*, *Liberty aſſerted*, &c. For indeed, when the Poet makes his own Story, he may eaſily, at leaſt with no very great difficulty, model it ſo, as to make it capable of the fineſt and moſt engaging Beauties of this Poem.

In this it muſt be confeſs'd, that the *Greeks* had the Advantage of us in the fabulous Part of their public Hiſtory. For their Country being divided, and cut out into petty Governments, afforded more frequent Adventures of this kind,

kind, than moſt of our true and Modern Hiſtories. Beſides, the double and various Traditions of theſe Fables left room for the Poets to chuſe which Tradition they liked beſt, and the Power of ſometimes altering what they call'd the Fact into the Veriſimilitude or Probability; as in the Story of *Iphigenia*, *Euripides* follows the receiv'd Story, *Polyides* the Veriſimilitude, when he makes the Diſcovery by *Oreſtes* exclaiming at the Altar, *As my Siſter was ſacrificed, ſo am I too*, which lets *Iphigenia* into the knowledge that he was her Brother. Thus *Euripides* alter'd the Story of *Medea* at the Inſtance of the *Corinthians* when he was writing it, by making *Medea* kill her own Children, who were ſlain by the *Corinthians*, in revenge of the Death of the Daughter of *Creon* their King. Our old Saxon Hiſtory, and our Heptarchy might afford Subjects of the ſame kind; and *Milton* tells us, that he writ it for the Uſe of the Poets. And then we ſhould not run into ſuch Abſurdities, as thoſe Authors do, who place their Scenes in hot Countries, and yet give the Perſons, the Manners of the *Engliſh*.

But to proceed, we offend againſt the *Goodneſs* of the *Manners*, when they are not *neceſſary*; that is, when they do not tend or incline the Perſon they inhere in to follow ſuch and ſuch Aims, or do ſuch and ſuch Actions, but, when the Perſon acts contrary before the End of the Play, to what the Manners he firſt appear'd with promis'd. And if they are not *neceſſary*, they can neither be *agreeable* nor *equal*; for we cannot offend againſt the *Goodneſs*, without ſinning againſt the other three, of which this is the Baſis and Foundation. A plain Example of this Error is given by *Ariſtotle* in the Manners of *Menelaus* in the *Oreſtes* of *Euripides*, which for your better underſtanding the Matter, I ſhall expreſs at large. *Menelaus* arrives at *Argos*, juſt as they are going to condemn *Oreſtes* to death for killing his Mother, tho' by the expreſs Order of the *Oracle*. *Oreſtes* hopes that the Arrival of his Uncle would deliver him from that Danger; and truly the *Manners* which *Euripides* gives him on

his firſt Appearance, perſuades us that he would not for-
ſake his Nephew: For he ſays, that his Calamity and
Diſtreſs obliges him to take the more Care of him; and
when *Tyndarus* preſs'd to have the Prince executed,
that he might revenge the Death of his Daughter *Cly-
temneſtra*, he tells him, that his long ſtay among the
Barbarians had made him one too. *Menelaus* reply'd
that he acted in that according to the *Grecian* Educa-
tion, for the *Greeks* always had a very tender and zea-
lous Regard to their Relations, and the Ties of Blood,
and thought that they were bound to do them all the
Service in their Power; nay he was ſo far tranſported
as to tell *Tyndarus*, that Anger, and old Age, had made
him a Fool. Thus far the *Manners* of *Menelaus* are
well denoted and plainly made appear to the Audience,
and all that he ſays, is what the Poets call a Moral
Speech, that is, a Diſcourſe directed by the Manners
and the Effect of them; and ſeem to aſſure us that he
will take a Reſolution agreeable to them. But this is
contradicted the next Moment; for *Menelaus* being ter-
rify'd at the Threats of *Tyndarus*, becomes at once very
fearful, and in a Cowardly manner abandons his Ne-
phew. So that the Manners *Euripides* gave *Menelaus*
were not *neceſſary*, as producing no Effect agreeable to
them. This I think is ſufficient to explain this Point.

We offend againſt the *Agreeableneſs* of the Manners
when we make a Man of Spirit and Courage deplorin
and lamenting his Misfortune in an unexpected or
dreaded Death; or when we introduce a Woman ar-
guing on Phyſical Notions, unfit for her Capacity, an
unbeſeeming her Character: That is, when we give
Hero Cowardice, and a Woman Impudence, who k
the Character of her Sex is Modeſt, or abſtruſe Know
ledge, which the Ladies are by no means eſteem'd ca
ble of. *Ariſtotle* inſtances in two Examples, firſt of th
Lamentations of *Ulyſſes*, for fear (as Monſieur *Dacie*
ſuppoſes, for the Piece is loſt) of Death from the Mo
ſter *Scylla*. And of *Menalippa*, perſuading her Fath

not to burn or deſtroy two Infants found in his Stables, which he took to be ſome monſtrous Production of his Cattle. For ſhe draws all her Arguments, as Tradition goes, from the natural Philoſophy of *Anaxagoras*; but the Subject ſhe treats of, which is that of the Generation of Animals; and the Learning ſhe makes uſe of, were both againſt what was *agreeable* to her Character.

We offend againſt the *Equality* of the *Manners*, when we give the Poetical Perſon certain well denoted Manners at the Beginning of the *Tragedy*, and before or at the End Manners that are quite contrary. I am oblig'd to take Examples from the Antients, ſince the Modern Tragic Poets of our Nation have ſeldom any thing in them that is regular or according to Art; nay few have any Manners at all. I ſhall therefore from *Ariſtotle*, and ſo from *Euripides* take an Example of this Error, (for *Ariſtotle* never had it enter into his Head that it was an ill natur'd thing to find Faults, tho' in the greateſt of the *Greek* Poets) *Iphigenia* at *Aulis* appears at firſt fearful, and pleads for her Life with her Father in a moſt Pathetic Manner; but at the End of the Play, the moſt couragious Hero could not look Death in the Face with greater Reſolution and Bravery.

As in the Diſpoſition of the *Subject*, ſo likewiſe in the *Manners* we ought always to regard and ſeek the *Neceſſary* and the *Veriſimilitude* or Probability; that is, we ought to take care that whatever comes to paſs, does ſo either neceſſarily or probably, for this is the Way to avoid all the Errors in the *Manners*: That is, we ought always to make the Dramatic Perſons ſpeak and act as in reality they would neceſſarily and probably do in thoſe Circumſtances, and on the like Occaſion. A young Man ought not to ſpeak and act like one in Years, nor an old Man like a young Man. It may happen that a young Man may have the Inclinations of Age, and an old Man thoſe of Youth; then this Neceſſity fails, and we muſt have Recourſe to the Veriſimilitude or Probability. But I believe this will only happen in ſome

known Story, and then the Likeneſs obliges us to ſtick only to the Probable. Yet in my Mind the Rarity of this in Fact ought to determine the Poet againſt ſuch a Choice. What I have ſaid here only of Age, may be extended to Sex, Quality, and Country, and all thoſe other Things which diſtinguiſh Mankind.

Since the *Manners* ought to produce the Actions, and that theſe Actions ought to ariſe one from another, it neceſſarily follows, that the Unravelling the Plot, which is alſo an Action, ought to ariſe either neceſſarily or probably from that which goes before, and which the Manners have already produc'd. Thus the Unravelling of the *Oedipus* ariſes from the Manners which produc'd the very Beginning of the Action of that Tragedy.

There are a ſort of Things in uſe among the antient Poets, which they call'd Machines, and which they often made uſe of in the Unravelling of the Plot. Of this kind is *Medea*'s Chariot, in which ſhe flyes away from *Corinth*, when ſhe had reveng'd herſelf on *Jaſon*. The *Philoctetes* is unravell'd by the Deſcent of *Hercules*, when *Pyrrhus* and *Ulyſſes* could not prevail with him to go with them to *Troy*, which could not be taken till *Philoctetes* brought the Arrows of *Hercules*. Here the Occaſion was important, and worthy the Preſence of the God both to cure his old Companion of his nauſeous Diſtemper, and alſo by his means to compleat the Deſtruction of *Troy*. Thus in the *Helena* of *Euripides*, a Deity is forc'd to deſcend in a Machine, to hinder *Theoclymenus* from purſuing *Menelaus* and *Helena* in their Flight.

This Interpoſition of the Divine Power in Human Affairs viſibly appears in many Events, and we have ſeen a devoted Nation reſcu'd plainly by Providence from a Deſtruction that the ſucceſſive Meaſures of the Managers, or thoſe who had the Power had render'd all other ways unavoidable. It muſt alſo be confeſs'd, that the firſt Appearance of Gods on the Stage was founded on the Opinion that the Gods ſaw all Things,

and

and took care of Mankind, contrary to the ſilly and equally impious Notions of the Atheiſts or Epicureans of thoſe Times; for to deny the Being of a God, and to deny his Omniſcience and Care of his Creatures, are equally ſo.

Yet ſpeaking of the Art of Tragedy, theſe Machines are but Botches, and very unartful, for they do not depend on the foregoing Incidents, nor are neceſſarily or probably produc'd by them, but indeed are generally quite contrary to them, and diſappoint all that they had prepar'd the Audience to expect. If the Story or Fable abſolutely require ſome Machine, the Poet ſhould take care that it be thrown out of the Action and Repreſentation, and only told; for indeed our Players can make but a ſcurvy Repreſentation of a heavenly or divine Being.

Thus all thoſe Incidents which belong to the Fable which are not reaſonable, that is, which do not perfectly agree to the Probability, ſhould be out of the Action of the Fable, and which is prudently obſerv'd by *Sophocles* in his *Oedipus*, (as *Ariſtotle* himſelf has obſerv'd) for it was not reaſonable, that is not agreeable to Probability, that *Oedipus* ſhould be ſo long married to *Jocaſta*, and not know in what manner *Laius* was kill'd; and without making Enquiry after the Murderers; but as that Subject, which is otherwiſe the fineſt in the World, cou'd not ſubſiſt without that, *Sophocles* did not think fit to omit it, but yet has plac'd it out of the Action of that Piece. That Incident is related as a Thing already done, and which precedes the Day of the Action; and the Poet is only anſwerable for thoſe Incidents, which enter into the Compoſition of his Subject, and not for thoſe which go before or follow it.

Since *Tragedy* (ſays *Ariſtotle*) is the Imitation of that which is moſt excellent among Men, the Poet ought to follow the Method of good Painters, who, in giving to every one his true Form and Likeneſs, do always, or at leaſt moſt commonly draw them more handſome and

beautiful than really they are. The Painters having fixt the Lines and Characteriſtic Strokes of the Originals in their Copies, then forſake them ſo far as to add a graceful Mien, a good Complexion, and a noble Air, and put the Figures in ſuch a Poſture, as may render theſe additional Beauties conſpicuous, and omit nothing that can encreaſe the Beauty of the Perſon, without changing the Features or Shape of the Face or Figure. And thus the Tragic Poets ought to act, and ſo much the more as they imitate Perſons of the moſt illuſtrious Degrees and Quality, as Kings and Princes; and they may make them ſo much the finer, as they are exalted above other Men; for thoſe Characters are capable of all the Embelliſhments that can be given them, if they are agreeable to the Truth, if they do not deſtroy the Reſemblance.

Thus if the Poet would imitate a paſſionate and choleric Man, or ſome other Character like that, by ſetting before our Eyes rather what ſuch an Anger might probably produce, than really what it did. That is, he ought rather to imitate *Nature*, who is the true Original, than to amuſe himſelf with any *Particulars*, which give us but an imperfect and confus'd Copy, or at leaſt ſo vicious that the Poet ought to avoid it. If a Poet therefore wou'd draw a choleric, unjuſt and paſſionate Man, he is oblig'd to keep the juſt Draught of that Man, his *Choler*, his *Injuſtice*, and his *Paſſion*; but in preſerving them, he has the liberty which Painters have, he may flatter and embelliſh them; and that he may do that, he ought not to fix on any particular Man of that Character in Hiſtory, but ought to conſult Nature, and borrow from her thoſe Colours that may render his Picture fine, without deſtroying the Reſemblance. The angry or choleric Man, may be *lazy*, *perfidious*, or a *Traitor*; but if the Poet join theſe Qualities to his Character, he will ſpoil inſtead of beautifying of his Picture; let him therefore ſeek other Colours, and Nature, who I ſay is the true *Original*, will not fail to ſhow him that *Valour*

perfectly

perfectly agrees with the fundamental Part of his Character, and conſequently he ſhould beſtow on his Hero a large ſhare of it. Thus has *Homer* done with ACHILLES, for by the Brillant of that wonderful Valour he has given him, he has almoſt hid, at leaſt he has very much obſcur'd thoſe Vices which the Fable had fixt on him, and which *Homer* could not alter, without deſtroying the Reſemblance.

Sophocles in his *Oedipus* uſes the ſame Conduct; he was to give us the Image of a Man paſſionate, violent and raſh, which he preſerves through the whole Character; thus he embelliſhes it, by making him a good and a valiant King, who omits nothing that may contribute to the good of his People. And thus it is, that the Poet ſet before us, what according to Probability ſuch a Character might do, rather than particular Matter of Fact.

The Poet ought to take care of pleaſing the two Senſes of Seeing and Hearing, and to ſhock neither of them, for on their Deciſion the Fate of his Performance depends. That is, he muſt repreſent all Incidents on the Stage, which will be agreeable to the Eye and Ear, but he muſt take care to keep all ſuch Incidents behind the Scenes which offer any thing ſhocking to either, and that are not highly conſiſtent with Probability. Thus, all cruel Objects ought to be hid, as that of *Medea*'s murdering her Children, and all miraculous Events, as the Transformations of Men or Women into other Creatures, whether Animal or Vegetable; yet beautiful Deſcriptions of theſe done with Force and Life will pleaſe the Ear, and the Mind, which ſeeing not the Fact, never examines into its Credibility or Cruelty; but this is already plainly expreſs'd in what I quoted to you from the Art of Poetry of *Horace*. Our *Engliſh* Poets have ſeldom taken any manner of care in this particular, but have generally taken care to repreſent the moſt barbarous Butcheries on the Stage. I will not ſay it has been for want of Eloquence, for want of a Poetical Force of Ima-

Imagination, by which they might give a moving, and as I may ſay an active Narration.

There are ſeveral ſorts of *Diſcoveries*, of which the fineſt and moſt artful is that which ariſes from the Incidents, as that of the *Oedipus*, and the Diſcovery of *Iphigenia*; that Princeſs by writing a Letter to *Oreſtes*, which, for fear of its being loſt, ſhe gives the Contents of by Word of Mouth to *Oreſtes*, is diſcover'd by him to be his Siſter, whom he had thought ſacrific'd at *Aulis* to *Diana*. But then the Diſcovery of *Oreſtes* to her is ſtrangeleſs beautiful; for it is done by telling her ſeveral Particulars in the Women's Apartment of *Clytemneſtra*, which indeed none could know but a Child of the Family; but the Poet was not confin'd to them, ſince he might have given any other; and theſe, not ariſing from the Incidents or Reaſon, muſt be leſs artful and touching.

Tokens, therefore, is another ſort, but they all labour under this ſame diſadvantage, and have nothing ingenious in them, becauſe they are not the neceſſary Effects of the Action. Another is certain Marks in the Body, as the Companions of *Cadmus*, who ſprung from the Earth, had all the Figure of a Lance on their Breaſts, and the like; theſe are better than the former, the Scars of Wounds, *&c.* Thus the Nurſe of *Ulyſſes* in the *Odyſſes*, diſcovers him by the Scar of the Wound in his Thigh, as ſhe waſhes his Legs, which Wound he receiv'd in his Youth by hunting the Boar on Mount *Parnaſſus*, and theſe may be made uſe of either more or leſs artfully; as the ſame is by *Homer*, when *Ulyſſes* himſelf ſhews this Scar to the Shepherds, to confirm in them the Belief of what he had told them as to his being *Ulyſſes*, for the latter has nothing ingenious nor ſurprizing, tho' rare, and therefore of little or no uſe. The Diſcovery formerly mention'd in *Polyides*, of *Oreſtes*, when at the Altar he cry'd out, *As my Siſter was ſacrificed to* Diana, *ſo ſhall I too*; for this naturally and neceſſarily diſcover'd him to be *Oreſtes*, which ſav'd his Life. All Tokens, as Scarves, Habiliments, Circumſtances and the like,

like, are of the worſe kind, the beſt of which that I remember, is that of the ION in *Euripides*, where the Prieſt delivering to *Ion* the Casket which was found with him, where he was expos'd, by the Things in it diſcovers him to his Mother, who had fled to the Temple for Sanctuary, that he was her Son, on which ſhe quits the Protection of the Altar, and flies into his Arms, and ſo is ſafe from her threatned Death.

There yet remains another, which is effected by *Reaſoning*, as in the ELECTRA of *Æſchylus*, where that Princeſs reaſons in this Manner — *There is one arriv'd who is like me, but there is none like me but my Brother* Oreſtes; *he muſt therefore be come to this City.*

There is yet another Way, that wants not its Beauty if well manag'd, and that is effected by the Memory. Thus, when *Ulyſſes* was at the Court of *Alcinous*, King of *Phæacia*, his Muſician *Demodocus* ſinging, at a Feſtival Entertainment, the ſeveral noble Actions done by *Ulyſſes* in the *Trojan* War, *Ulyſſes* could not refrain from Tears; by which it was diſcover'd by *Alcinous*, who he really was, being not known till that Diſcovery. The ſight of a Picture, or of ſome particular fatal Place may have the ſame Effect.

To paſs from the Theory to the Practice, that is from obſerving and pointing out the Rules which the Poet ought to be Maſter of, before he preſume to think of putting Pen to Paper, to what he muſt do, and how he muſt order himſelf when he ſets himſelf to write; and in this as well as in what I have ſaid, I ſhall follow *Ariſtotle* as cloſe as I can.

The Poet therefore, who reſolves on a *Tragedy*, muſt in the firſt place draw a Plan of his Subject, and to write it as exactly as poſſible; and this he muſt be ſure to look all over ſeveral times: For by thus carefully viewing all its Parts, as if we were concern'd in the Action, or were indeed a Part of the Audience, we ſhall certainly diſcover as well what is proper and convenient,

venient, as all its Defects, and the leaſt Contrariety that may in the Writing have eſcap'd us.

When the general Plan is form'd, the Poet ſhould endeavour, before he ſets to write, at any time during the penning of the whole Piece, to imitate with his own Body the Geſtures and Actions of thoſe Dramatic Perſons, to whom he is about to give Words and Sentiments proper to the Paſſions they are here poſſeſs'd with; to which I muſt add, that he ſhould likewiſe imitate the Voice, and the Utterance; all which join'd together will fix in his Soul the Paſſion and Characters he is writing, and by that means he can never miſs drawing them according to Nature. This was the Method that *Otway* follow'd, as I have been aſſur'd by an intimate Acquaintance of his; and to this Method I muſt in great meaſure attribute his admirable touching of the Paſſions. *Ariſtotle* affirms, that, let two Poets of an equal Genius write on the ſame Subject, he who writes when he has wrought himſelf into the Paſſion by imitating the Geſture, *&c.* will ſucceed much better, than he who ſits down, and calmly conſiders what is proper for ſuch or ſuch a Character to do or ſay: The Reaſon is, that he who is touch'd himſelf with a Paſſion, the more eaſily moves the ſame Paſſion in another.

But this is a Task that every Scribler can't perform; the Poet muſt at the ſame time have a conſummate *Knowledge* of the Effects of ſuch a Paſſion in a Perſon of ſuch a Character; for the Manners of Men give a different Aſpect to the Paſſions, as well as to the Proofs of things; he muſt likewiſe have a moſt extenſive, warm and fertile *Imagination*, rais'd with a ſort of fierce Enthuſiaſm, which ſeems to be what my Lord *Roſcommon* means by *Fury*:

Write with Fury, and correct with Phlegm.

But here remains yet a Difficulty, which *Ariſtotle* himſelf has not taken notice of, and which is yet not to be avoided.

It may not ſeem ſo hard for a Man to put on a Paſſion by the Force of Imagination, which may carry him

throu

hrough the expreſſing of it in the whole Play; but then e Dramatic Paſſions are not in one Perſon, two are enerally concern'd in them, ſometimes three; and the oet, in the height of his Paſſion (in *Oedipus*, for exam-le) muſt break off, and go to what *Tereſias* ſays, who of quite a different Character; and not only that, but uſt in this Scene perhaps thus ſtart from one Character the other, and be perfectly Maſter of them both.

Is this a Task for overgrown SCHOOL-BOYS, who now no more of Mankind than they can learn from an cademic Converſation, or at moſt from a ſhort Elope-ent to *London*, where their Company, generally eaking, is none of the moſt inſtructive? Is this the ork of *Pedants*, who are ſo hot in the Chace of ords and Expreſſions, that they never will underſtand rt, or know Mankind? Is this Toil fit for the La-es (ſuppoſing them capable of the Qualifications of a eat Genius) to diſcompoſe the Serenity of their Looks d Geſtures, and fill their Hearts with other Paſſions an their own?

But to draw towards a Concluſion of what I have to y on this Noble Poem call'd *Tragedy*, this forming e Plan of the Subject, which *Ariſtotle* preſcribes, is nfirm'd by the Excellent ESSAY ON POETRY; and erefore I ſhall repeat his Grace's Words.

Firſt on a Plot employ thy careful Thoughts,
Turn it with Time a thouſand different Ways.
Beſides the main Deſign compos'd with Art,
Each moving Scene muſt be a Plot apart.
Contrive each little Turn, mark every Place,
As Painters firſt chalk out the future Face:
Yet be not fondly your own Slave for this,
But change hereafter what appears amiſs.

This is exactly according to *Ariſtotle* and Reaſon, for re in the *Plan* the Poet firſt forms his general Deſign, the main Fable, and either with or without Names;

if

if the latter, when the general Plot is form'd, he ad
his Names to the Perſons, and ſuch circumſtantiati
Incidents, as make it only agree with thoſe Name
and then proceeds to all the other Incidents in their n
tural and ſucceſſive Order, till they produce the un
velling of the Plot, either by a Change of the Fortu
of the principal Perſons, or a Diſcovery, which is t
moſt beautiful Way, and which I would always adv
the Poet to make it his Endeavour to do. It is plai
that all the Particular Scenes depend on theſe In
dents; but then there are in Nature many beauti
Turns in Scenes, which a judicious Poet will find; a
theſe Turns are what my Lord Duke ſays muſt be a P
apart; not that they are to be diſtinct from the m
Deſign, but entirely dependent on it, elſe they would
monſtrous, and not of apiece with the Subject; b
that the Poet ſhould not content himſelf in drawing
Plan, to ſet down only the general Fable, but ev'n
the Turns of the Paſſions and Incidents made uſe of
illuſtrate this Fable.

Yet be not fondly your own Slave for this,
But change hereafter what appears amiſs.

This is the very Reaſon why *Ariſtotle* adviſes the P
to form a *Plan*; that is, that ſeeing the whole Cond
together, he might find out the Defects, and alter th
before he proceeds to the finiſhing the Piece, and
putting it into that Garb it is to wear to the Audienc

There remain two Parts of *Tragedy* not yet ſpok
to; the firſt the *Sentiments*, the ſecond the *Diction*. T
Sentiments make the whole Matter of the Diſcour
and they conſiſt in *proving*, *refuting*, in exciting
Paſſions, as of *Pity*, *Anger*, *Fear*, *Love*, and all oth
to raiſe or debaſe the Value of any Thing. Hence it
evident (ſays *Ariſtotle*) that the Poets in the Subject
Tragedy ought to make uſe of the ſame Reaſons wh
the Orators do, when they would make Things app
wor

orthy of *Pity*, or *Terrible*, or *Great*, or *Probable*.
This indeed is very juſt in that part of the Diſcourſe hich is not immediately concern'd in a violent Paſſion; t there the Poet muſt, by knowing the Qualities or anners that form his Character, and the Nature of at Paſſion which there prevails, put ſuch Sentiments juſtly ariſe from the Occaſion and thoſe other men-n'd Cauſes.

Ariſtotle refers the Poet to *Rhetoric* to be inform'd in e Sentiments in general, and I think I cannot offer a ore reaſonable Fountain of Diſcourſe.

All I ſhall ſay of the Diction, is, that it ought to be re, without falſe Grammar, oftentimes elevated, and metimes directly the contrary. Anger has a Language uliar to itſelf, Grief another, and ſo of the reſt, as is eady expreſs'd from *Horace*. But to be a Maſter of *ction*, a Man muſt be a Maſter of *Rhetoric*, ſo far is e *Diction* from being a principal Part of Poetry. But ough of this.

I have been ſo long on Tragedy, that I ſhall be the orter on Comedy; becauſe it is more known, and t we have the beſt in our own Tongue of any her Ancient or Modern.

I ſhall begin with the *Eſſay on Poetry*, ſo often oted.

Think not ſo much where ſhining Thoughts to place,
As what a Man would ſay in ſuch a Caſe.
Neither in COMEDY *will this ſuffice,*
The Player too muſt be before your Eyes;
And tho' 'tis Drudgery to ſtoop ſo low,
To him you muſt your ſecret Meaning ſhow.
Expoſe no ſingle Fop; but lay the Load
More equally, and ſpread the Folly broad.
The other Way is vulgar; oft we ſee
The Fool derided by as bad as he.
Hawks fly at nobler Game; in this low Way
A very Owl may prove a Bird of Prey.

III

Ill Poets ſo will ane poor Fop devour;
But to collect, like Bees, from ev'ry Flow'r,
Ingredients to compoſe that precious Juice,
Which ſerves the World for Pleaſure and for Uſe,
In ſpite of Faction, this would Favour get;
But Falſtaff *ſeems inimitable yet.*

Another Fault, which often does befall,
Is, when the Wit of ſome great Poet ſhall
So overflow, that is, be none at all,
That all his Fools ſpeak Senſe, as if poſſeſt,
And each by Inſpiration breaks his Feſt.
If once the Juſtneſs of each Part be loſt,
Well may we laugh, but at the Poet's Coſt.
That ſilly Thing Men call Sheer-wit, avoid,
With which our Age ſo nauſeouſly is cloy'd.
Humour is all, Wit ſhould be only brought
To turn agreeably ſome proper Thought.

Theſe Maxims are moſt worthy of our Comic Writer's ſerious Thoughts, and ought always by him to be remember'd, becauſe they are Rules without any Exception.

Ariſtotle affords me no Aſſiſtance in Comedy, there being ſcarce any thing left on that Poem, but the Definition; which therefore I will give you. *Comedy* (ſays he) *is the Imitation of the worſt Men* (that is, the meaner and more vulgar ſort.) *I mean not* (ſays he) *the worſt in all ſorts of Vices, but only in the* Ridicule. *For the* Ridicule *is properly a Defect, and Deformity, without Pain, and which never contributes to the Deſtruction of the Subject in which it is.*

We may obſerve here the Difference *Ariſtotle* makes between the Definition of *Comedy*, and that of *Tragedy*; this he defines to be the Imitation of an *Action*, that of *Men*. But we muſt remember, that *Ariſtotle* had an eye only to the *Old* or Middle *Comedy*; and tho' he might have ſeen the New *Comedy* introduc'd by *Menander*, yet it ſeems plain that his Definition does not reach it.

or *Menander*, if we may judge by *Terence*, and the ther Authors that follow'd his Example, as we find by *lautus*, had a *Comical* Action in view, as much as the ragic Poets had one that was grave and important.

Comedy therefore imitates common Life in its *Actions* d *Humours*, laughing at, and rendring Vice and Folly *diculous*, and recommending Virtue by the Succeſs it ways does or ought to give it. It is indeed (as a Mo. rn Author ſays) the Imitation of Life, the Mirrour Cuſtom, and the Image of Truth; and whatever *medy* follows not this Path, is not worthy of the Name. he beſt, at leaſt, of *Ben. Johnſon*'s, are ſo.

Comedy has Parts of *Quantity*, and Parts of *Qua.* y. Of the Parts of *Quality* there are four which are ential; that is, the *Fable*, the *Manners*, the *Senti.* nts, and the *Diction*; and without theſe four Parts *Comedy* can be juſtly written. For the *Poet* muſt ne. ſſarily invent the *Subject*, on which he writes, and at is what we call the *Fable*, or the *Plot*. But ſince the ble is an *Imitation*, it muſt neceſſarily have the *Man.* rs: that is, the Comic Poet muſt nicely and juſtly ex. eſs the Tempers, Humours, and Manners of the ſeve. l *Dramatic* Perſons, that are repreſented in his *Co.* dy. The *Sentiments* are added, becauſe we muſt diſ. ver by them their Senſe and Opinion in Words. And cauſe there is no other way of doing this but by ords, the Diction is admitted into the number of theſe ur Eſſential Parts.

The Difference of the Perſon very much alters the anners, and diſtinguiſhes them from one another: or thoſe Manners which are worthy of Praiſe in one, e far from being ſo in another, as being not at all con. nient, or agreeable to his Character. This is plain en in ſome Arts; it is a valuable Qualification in a lgar Perſon to play finely on the *Violin*, the *Flute*, *Hautboy*, &c. but this in a Prince or Stateſman would e ridiculous, and wholly unworthy of and diſagreeable his Dignity. A Woman deſerves Admiration and Praiſe

Praiſe for being a great Miſtreſs of her Needle, but th being no Qualification of a Man, in him would be ridi culous. The Manners muſt therefore be agreeable t every Man's Station, and Age. The Common Life the beſt Book to ſtudy theſe Points, when we are onc Maſters of the Rules of Art. In the mean while, th following Verſes out of *Horace*, will be a very gre Help to us; for they expreſs what is agreeable to th ſeveral Ages and Stations of Man. Thus the Lord Ro COMMON gives them to us in Blank Verſe; which inde I have already quoted, with the whole Context, in th beginning of this Diſcourſe; but they here being pe fectly neceſſary, and more, in my Opinion, relating t Comedy than Tragedy, I ſhall repeat them.

One that has lately learn'd to ſpeak and go,
Loves childiſh Plays, is ſoon provok'd and pleas'd,
And changes ev'ry Hour his wav'ring Mind.
A Youth, that firſt caſts off his Tutor's Yoke,
Loves Horſes, Hounds, and Sports, and Exerciſe;
Prone to all Vice, impatient of Reproof;
Proud, careleſs, fond, inconſtant, and profuſe.
Gain and Ambition rule our riper Years,
And make us Slaves to Intereſt and Pow'r.
Old Men are only walking Hoſpitals,
Where all Defects, and all Diſeaſes, croud
With reſtleſs Pain, and more tormenting Fear,
Lazy, moroſe, full of Delays and Hopes,
Oppreſs'd with Riches which they dare not uſe;
Ill-natur'd Cenſors of the preſent Age,
And fond of all the Follies of the paſt.
Thus all the Treaſure of our flowing Years,
Our Ebb of Life for ever takes away;
Boys muſt not have th' ambitious Care of Men,
Nor Men the weak Anxieties of Age.

Obſerve the Characters of thoſe who ſpeak.

Whether an Honeſt Servant, or a Cheat,
Or one whoſe Blood boils in his youthful Veins;

Or a grave Matron, or a buſie Nurſe,
Extorting Tradeſmen, careful Husbandmen.

Beſides theſe, the Poet muſt have regard to the ſeve-
al Climates of the World, and give his Perſons Man-
ers agreeable to the Country he makes them of.

Tho' theſe are the general Rules for thoſe Characters
hat fall under them, yet Engliſh *Comedy* having *Hu-
our* for its chief Object, it will be neceſſary to ſay
omething of it. Tho' the Authors and *Critics* cannot
gree in its Definition, but ſeem to make it, like Wit,
ncapable of a Definition; yet let us hear thoſe who
ould bring it to a greater Certainty. *Humour* is
herefore a ſubordinate or weaker Paſſion, and that in
erſons of a lower Degree than thoſe that are admitted
nto *Tragedy*. Every Paſſion has two Faces, one that
ſerious, great, ſolemn, terrible; and that is for *Tra-
dy*; and another, that is low, comical, and ridiculous,
nd this is call'd *Humour*, as will appear from what
have to ſay at the end of this Diſcourſe.

Affectation is likewiſe thought to be fit for *Comedy*,
having a great deal of the *Ridiculous* in it, and what
ay be very well corrected by this ſort of Poem. Your
haracters muſt maintain the ſame *Humour*, Affectation,
c. thro' the whole Play, which they ſhew the Audi-
nce at the opening of the very firſt Scene.

The Parts of *Quantity* of a Comedy are likewiſe four,
The *Entrance*, which gives Light only or chiefly to
e Characters, and makes no great Progreſs into the Ac-
on. 2dly, The *working up of the Plot*, where the
ay grows warmer, and the Deſign or Action of it is
rawing on, ſo that you diſcover ſomething promiſing.
dly, The *full Growth* of the *Plot*, which we may pro-
rly call the *Counter-Turn*; which deſtroys the Ex-
ctation, and embroils the Action in new Difficulties,
aving you far diſtant from the Hopes in which it found
ou. 4thly, The *Diſcovery* or *Unravelling* of the *Plot*;
hen you ſee all things ſettling again on their firſt

Foundation. The Obſtacles which hinder'd the *Deſig* or *Action* of the Play, once remov'd, it ends with th Reſemblance of *Truth*, and Nature, ſo that the Audi ence retire perfectly pleas'd and ſatisfy'd with the Poet' Conduct in it.

But to make this yet plainer, I ſhall conſider the Di viſion of our Plays into five Acts; which Number h been fix'd at leaſt theſe ſeventeen hundred Years, an condemns our Farces and all the *Spaniſh* Plays, in th Particular.

The firſt Act contains the Matter or Argument of t Fable, and the introducing the principal Characters; a this is admirably done by *Ben Johnſon*, in his *Alchymi* where the Audience is let into the Deſign and Chara ters, by a Quarrel between *Subtle* and *Face*, who a the chief Managers of the whole Deſign. The *ſecon* brings the Affairs or Buſineſs into Act. The *third* fu niſhes Obſtacles and Difficulties. The *fourth* eith ſhews how theſe Difficulties may be remov'd, or fin new in the Attempt. The *fifth* puts an End to them a in a fortunate Diſcovery, and ſettles the whole Matt according to Reaſon and Probability.

As a Proof that Humour is the ridiculous ſide of *Pa ſion*, and to aſſiſt the *Comic Poet*, I would recommen him to the peruſal of the *Muſes Looking-Glaſs*, writt by Mr. *Randolph*, one of the adopted Sons of the f mous *Ben Johnſon*, where he will find all the Humou in Nature in their Source, many of their Compoſition and which by an artful Hand may be compounded *in i finitum*. To be particular, would be either too tedio for this Time, or too Imperfect.

Thus I have given you the Rules of the Art of t *Stage*, which if follow'd, I am perſwaded, would gi another Air at leaſt to our *Tragedies*, than they ha ever ſhewn in this Climate.

Here LAUDON made an End; and having receiv'd t Thanks of the Company, we all parted.

The End of the Fourth Dialogue.

THE Art of POETRY.

DIALOGUE V.

The Rules of the EPIC *or* NARRATIVE *Poem, of the Poetic Diction or Language, and of* English *Numbers.*

THE Company being met according to the Adjournment, and now left to themselves, LAUDON thus began.

Breathless almost we are at last got up
Parnassus *Hill, on whose bright airy Top*
The Epic Poets *so divinely show,*
And with just Pride behold the rest below.
Heroic Poems *have a just Pretence*
To be the highest Reach of humane Sense;
A Work of such inestimable Worth,
There are but two the World has yet brought forth,
Homer *and* Virgil; *with what sacred Awe*
Do those meer Sounds the World's Attention draw!
Just as a Changeling seems below the rest
Of Men, or rather is a two-leg'd Beast;

So these Gigantic *Souls, amaz'd, we find*
As much above the rest of humane Kind.
Nature's whole Strength united; endless Fame,
And universal Shouts attend their Name.
Read Homer *once, and you can read no more,*
For all Things else appear so dull and poor,
Verse will seem Prose; yet often on him look,
And you will hardly need another Book.
Had Bossu *never writ, the World had still,*
Like Indians, *view'd this wond'rous Piece of Skill;*
As something of Divine the Work admir'd,
Not hop'd to be instructed, but inspir'd:
But he, disclosing sacred Mysteries,
Has shewn where all the mighty Magick lies,
Describ'd the Seeds, and in what Order sown,
That have to such a vast Proportion grown.
Sure from some Angel he this Secret knew,
Who thro' this Labyrinth has giv'n the Clue.
But what, alas! avails it poor Mankind,
To see this promis'd Land, yet stay behind?
The Way is shewn; but who has Strength to go?
What skilful Bard does ev'ry Science know?
Whose Fancy flies beyond weak Reason's Sight,
And yet has Judgment to direct it right?
Whose just Discernment, Virgil-*like, is such,*
Never to say too little, or too much?
Let such a Man begin without delay,
But he must do beyond what I can say;
Must above Milton's *lofty Flights prevail,*
Succeed where Spenser *and* Torquato *fail.*

I have begun my Discourse on this sort of Poe
with this high Eulogy upon it, from that great and j
dicious Critic, the present Duke of *Buckingham* a
Normanby; who has furnish'd us with so many f
Remarks and Instructions on the other Parts of Poet
But the very Reason he gives of the Difficulty, and
afford

afforded us but two of the kind ever since the Birth of Poetry, almost concludes me against saying any thing of it, for fear it should be a meer Labour in vain. For as for our judging of them, the unanimous Applause of all the Polite World ever since their Appearance decides their Excellence; and as for others that have appeared under that Title among the *Greeks* and the *Latins*, their Sentence is long since past, and they utterly excluded. If indeed nothing distinguish'd an Heroic Poet from others, but his manner or sort of Verse, as GERARD VOSSIUS has very weakly determin'd, the Number would be vastly encreas'd, by admitting all into that Rank who have written in Heroic Verse. But since the Distinction of Authors is rather from their Subject, their Design, their Fable, their Diction or Language, it is plain that among the Antients we find only HOMER and VIRGIL, and among the Moderns, not one; unless we should allow TORQUATO TASSO, and MILTON. The latter indeed has equall'd, if not excell'd the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets in many Things; and I must so far agree with the Gentleman, who in the *Spectator* made his Remarks on his Poem of PARADICE LOST, that if it fail in some Particulars through the necessity of the Subject, our blind Bard has discover'd in other Things a Genius worthy of the Fraternity of HOMER and VIRGIL.

As for those other Things which have come out, either in *Italy* or *France*, nay, and in *England* too, they have no Pretence to be lifted up to this airy Top of *Parnassus*. Some little Reflections will not therefore be amiss, whilst there are Men who have Vanity enough to fancy themselves Epic Poets, and have the Luck of a transient Reception of their Works in this kind. We have seen Examples of this more than once, and it is very likely we may have more Attempts in the same kind, from Men, who, by a false and unmerited Applause of the unjudging Town, may imagine themselves equal to this arduous Task.

I perfectly agree with you, my dear Friend LAUDON, (ſaid I) ſo that, as there ſeems to ariſe hence a neceſſity of ſaying ſomething of the *Narrative Poem*, we need not ſtretch our Rules to all that has been offer'd by that admirable Critic Monſieur BOSSU, but touch the Heads of Things in general; eſpecially ſince what has been ſaid of *Tragedy*, will afford a great if not complete Help to our Judgment on the Epic Performance.

ARISTOTLE (aſſum'd LAUDON) diſtinguiſhes Poeſy into three kinds of Poems, the *Ethic* (or that which regards our Manners) the *Tragic*, and the *Comic*. *Horace* reduces theſe to two, one conſiſting in *Action*, the other in *Narration*.

The *Epic* or *Narrative* Poem, is, in the Opinion of VOSSIUS, *Rapin*, and the Duke of *Buckingham*, the greateſt and moſt noble in *Poeſy*. It is, ſays *Rapin*, the greateſt Work that humane Wit is capable of. All the Nobleneſs, and all the Elevation of the moſt perfect *Genius* can hardly ſuffice to form one ſuch as is requiſite for an Heroic Poet: The Difficulty of finding together *Fancy* and *Judgment*, Heat of Imagination, and Sobriety of Reaſon. Precipitation of Spirit, and Solidity of Mind cauſes the rarity of Character, and of that happy Temperament, which makes a Poet accompliſh'd. It requires great *Images*, and yet a greater Wit to form them. Finally, there muſt be a Judgment ſo ſolid, a Diſcernment ſo exquiſite, ſuch perfect Knowledge in the Language in which he writes, ſuch obſtinate Study, profound Meditation, and vaſt Capacity, that ſcarce whole Ages can produce one Genius fit for an *Epic* Poem. And it is an Enterprize ſo bold, that it cannot fall into a Wiſe Man's Thoughts but it muſt affright him. Yet how many Poets have we ſeen of late Days, who, without *Capacity*, and without Study, have dar'd to undertake theſe ſorts of Poems, having no other Foundation for all, but only the *Heat* of their Imagination, and ſome Briskneſs of Spirit.

But

But another Hindrance (ſaid I) to this *Character*, is to have a Wit too vaſt, for ſuch a Wit will make nothing *exact* in Works of this kind, whoſe chief Perfection is *Juſtneſs*. Theſe Wits, that ſtrike at all, are apt to paſs the Boundaries; and the Indulgence and unbridled Swing of their *Genius*, hurries them to Irregularity; for as their Wit is not, ſo is nothing they do exact: All they ſay, and all they imagine is *vaſt*, ſo that they have neither Proportion in their Deſign, Juſtneſs in the Thought, nor Exactneſs in the Expreſſion. This Fault is common to moſt of the modern Poets of any Figure, eſpecially to the *Spaniards*, as for Inſtance in the Poem of *Diego Ximenes* on *Cid Ruidyas de Rivar*, and *Camoens* in his Poem of the *Conqueſt of the Indians* by the *Portugueſe*; and among the *Italians*, *Bocardo*, *Arioſto*, *Marino*, and *Chiabrera*, whoſe Works are very ill Patterns for an Heroic Poem. They are perpetually digreſſing, yet there is always Wit in their *Digreſſions*. The *French* (as *Rapin* a Frenchman obſerves) who pretend to Wit, and love it ev'n in Trifles, let the Poems of *Arioſto* and *Marino* blindly miſlead them, as our SPENSER has done with a much greater Genius than any of our Neighbours can boaſt. The Beauty of their Verſe and Expreſſion, the pleaſing Images which they make of the Things they treat of, had ſo enchanted moſt of the ſucceeding Poets, that they have not ſeen the groſs Enormities of Judgment into which theſe Poets do fall. But this is common with Poets of a hot and lively Wit, and little Judgment. They endeavour to hide what is irregular in their Works, by glittering Faults and falſe Beauties; but to ſuſtain a *great Deſign* in the utmoſt Regularity, requires great Judgment and Wiſdom.

The Value of *Heroic Poeſy* (aſſum'd LAUDON) is yet more exalted by the *Matter*, and by its End, than by its Form. All it conſiders, all it diſcourſes of, is of *Kings* and *Princes*; and the Leſſons it gives, are to the Great Men to govern the People, ſetting before them

the Idea of a much more perfect Pattern of Virtue than Hiſtory can afford. For Hiſtory propoſes *Virtue* imperfect as it is found in *Particulars*, but Poetry propoſes it free from all Imperfections, as it ought to be in the *General* and in the *Abſtract*. This made *Ariſtotle* declare, That *Poetry* is a better School of Virtue than *Philoſophy* itſelf, becauſe it goes more directly to Perfection by the Veriſimilitude, than Philoſophy can do by the *Naked* Truth; and becauſe the Poet gives not a Reaſon for what he ſays, as the Philoſopher does, but the Reaſon muſt be perceiv'd without his offering it.

Poeſy in general is a Picture or Imitation of an *Action*, and *Heroic Poeſy* is the Imitation or Picture of an *Heroic Action*, as *Ariſtotle* informs us. And he gives theſe Qualities to this Action to be imitated by it, that it be *one*, and *ſimple*, *true*, or what paſſes for *true*; and that it ought to be *happy*, commendable, and *entire*. It muſt be *one* and *ſimple*, to avoid *Confuſion*; it muſt be *true*, to deſerve Credit; happy and commendable, to ſerve for a Pattern and Inſtruction to the *Great Men*, and to be a public Example of Virtue. Finally, it muſt be *entire*, that there be nothing in it imperfect. Theſe Conditions are ſo eſſential to the *Action* which is to be the Subject of an *Heroic Poem*, that it is altogether defective if any one of theſe Qualities be wanting. But that the Action may be entirely perfect in a Poem, all muſt go in a direct Line to eſtabliſh the Merit of the Hero, and to diſtinguiſh him from all others. As the Figures in a Piece of *Hiſtory Painting* ought to have nothing ſo ſhining either by the Colours or by the Lights, as may divert the Eyes from the principal Figure. In this, *Taſſo* was miſtaken, who, in his Poem of *Hieruſalem*, makes *Rinaldo* do all that is ſhining; and *Godfrey*, who is the Hero of the Poem, has nothing to do. *Homer*, whoſe Senſe and Judgment were far greater, by a Spirit directly contrary, makes *Achilles*, who is his Hero, do all. Tho' it may perhaps be ſaid that he ſometimes ſtrays too far from

from him. But *Virgil* never falls into this Error; we never loſe ſight of *Æneas* through the whole *Æneis*.

The *Action* muſt neither be too *vaſt*, nor too *confin'd*, it muſt have a juſt Greatneſs, and within the natural Proportion of an *Heroic Action*, to be perfect. The War or Siege of *Troy* that continued ten Years, had been a Matter diſproportion'd for a Poem; ſo large an Object had tir'd the *Wit*, tho' a natural *Action* of the ſame Man cannot regularly be of that Extent; that is, ſuch a Subject muſt of neceſſity have included divers Actions; whereas the Imitation of an Heroic Poem is but of one Action, as the Anger of *Achilles*; the Return of *Ulyſſes*; and the Settlement of *Æneas*, with his Gods, in *Italy*. But on the other Hand, the Epic Action muſt not be too much confin'd and limited, leſt it become deſpicable by the *Littleneſs*.

The *Unity* of the *Action*, however *ſimple* and ſcrupulous it ought to be, is no Enemy to thoſe Delights, which naturally ariſe from *Variety*, when the Variety is attended with that *Order*, or that *Proportion* which makes *Uniformity*. As one Palace may contain the various Ornaments of Architecture, and a great Diverſity of Parts; provided it be built in the ſame Order, and after the ſame Deſign. This Variety has a large field in *Heroic Poeſy*: The Enterprizes of War, the Treaties of Peace, Embaſſies, Negotiations, Voyages, Councils, Debates, building of Palaces and Towns, Manners, Paſſions, unexpected Diſcoveries, unforeſeen and ſurprizing Revolutions, and the different Images of all that happens in the Lives of great Men, may here be employ'd, provided they are all directed to, and carry on the ſame End. Without this Order, the moſt beautiful Figures become monſtrous, and like thoſe Extravagancies that *Horace* taxes as ridiculous in the beginning of his Book of the *Art of Poetry*.

This great Variety of Matters, which adorns a Poem, are brought into the principal Action, by the great Skill of the Poet in forming his additional Parts, which

the Critics call *Epiſodes*. But theſe are a ſort of Digreſſions from the Subject, being Adventures wholly foreign, that are added to the *principal Action* to adorn it; yet they ought however to have a Relation to the *principal Action*, to make a Work that has *Order* and *Proportion*. And therefore the Decorum of Perſon, Time, and Place muſt be preſerv'd. Without this Condition, an *Epiſode* is no longer *probable*, and there appears an Air of Affectation which becomes ridiculous; which *Horace* objects to the witleſs Poet, who would be *gay* in grave Subjects, and ſeek foreign Ornaments, where only the native were proper. Thus, *Lucan* makes long Scholaſtic Diſſertations and Diſputes, merely Speculative, on things that fall in his way, which ſhows much Conſtraint and Affectation. But as the *Epiſode* muſt be native and never far fetch'd, ſo is it to be handled with a certain Management and Dexterity, that it may not be in the Way to make a *Confuſion*, nor burthen the Subject with too much Action. 'Tis in this that the Art of *Homer* particularly ſhines, who never confounds any thing in the Throng of the Objects which he repreſents. Never was Poem more charg'd with Matter, than the *Iliad*, yet never any appeared more ſimple and more natural; for every thing there is in its due Order. The moſt natural *Epiſodes* are moſt proper to circumſtantiate the principal Action beſt, that are the *Cauſes*, the *Effects*, the Beginnings, or the Conſequences of it. But we do not always find theſe Qualifications in *Taſſo*, who endeavours ſo often to pleaſe by Paſſages, that are too glittering. And much leſs in *Arioſto*, whoſe *Epiſodes* are too affected, never probable, never prepar'd, and often without any dependance on this Subject; as the of King *Agramante*, and *Marfiſa*. But the Air of Knight Errantry and *Romance* is viſible in this Poet more than any true Spirit of an Heroic Writer.

Tho' all muſt be natural in an Heroic Poem, yet the Order that is obſerv'd in the Relation of Things ought not to be ſo. For if we read it naturally and accord-

to the Succeſſion of Time, it would be a Hiſtory, and not a Poem. And by that means we ſhould fall into the ſame Fault with the impertinent Scribler ridicul'd by *Horace*, who began his Poem of the *Trojan* War, with the Loves of *Jupiter* and *Leda*, and with the Birth of *Helen*, who was the Cauſe of the War. For to render the Narration the more inſinuating, delightful and ſurprizing, the Poet muſt confound the natural Order of Times and Things, to make of it one purely artificial. 'Tis by this Maxim, that the Poem of *Stemius* upon *Bacchus*, the *Thebaid* of *Statius*, and the Poems of the firſt *Italians*, who writ before they knew the Rules of *Ariſtotle*, and ſome of *Spain*, are ſo defective.

The principal Character of an *Heroic Poem* conſiſts in the *Narration*; in this it is oppos'd to, and diſtinguiſh'd from the *Dramatic*, which altogether conſiſts in *Action*: But as nothing is more difficult than to relate Things as we ought, the Poet muſt employ all his Art to ſucceed in it. The Qualities, which a *Narration*, muſt have to be perfect, are theſe: It muſt be ſhort and ſuccinct, that nothing may be *idle*, *flat*, or *tedious*; it muſt be *lively*, *quick*, *ſpirituous*, and *delightful*, that it may have nothing but what is *attractive*; finally it muſt be *ſimple* and *natural*. But it requires great Art to know how to relate Things *ſimply*, and not let the *Simplicity* appear. The moſt ordinary Graces of a *Narration* muſt come from the Figures and Tranſitions, and from all thoſe delicate Turns, that carry the Reader from one thing to another imperceptibly, and in this chiefly conſiſts all the Artifice of a Narration. It muſt never exhauſt all the Matter, that ſome Place may always be left to the natural Reflections of the Reader; it muſt likewiſe avoid the Particulars, and the Length of affected Deſcriptions. *Homer*, as great an Orator as he was, muſes not himſelf to diſcourſe of the Torments of the unhappy in Hell, when *Ulyſſes* deſcended thither, tho' that was a fair Occaſion for him to do it. But the Poet, when he is judicious, makes no *Deſcriptions* merely to

ſhow his Wit, but ſuch only as ſerve to clear the Matter. In ſhort, the Narration muſt be delightful, not only by the Variety of the Things which it relates, but alſo by the Variety of the Numbers. In the Moderns we ſhall ſcarce ever meet with Narrations, that are continued with the ſame Force and the ſame Spirit, as they are in *Homer* and *Virgil*, except *Milton*, and often *Spenſer*; 'tis by theſe great Models, that a Poet ſhould learn to be Pathetical in what he relates, without amuſing himſelf with ſubtil and witty Narrations, by a ridiculous Affectation; nor can I approve of the Deſcriptions of *Alcinas*'s Palace in *Arioſto*, nor of that of *Armida* in *Taſſo*, nor of the Particulars of the pleaſant Things, which both of them mix in their Narrations. By theſe they degenerate from their Character, and ſhew a kind of puerility that is in no wiſe conformable to the Gravity of an Heroic Poem, where all ought to be Great and Majeſtic.

There is nothing more eſſential to this Poem, than *Fiction:* this ought to reign throughout, for it is the very Soul of it. By this the moſt common Things take a Character of Greatneſs and Sublimity, which renders them extraordinary and admirable. *Ariſtotle* gave but the Shadow of this Precept, which *Petronius* has drawn more fully, *The free Spirit is to be precipitated by the Ambages, and the Miniſtry of the Gods.* Thus the meaneſt Things become noble; *Thetis* thus, in *Homer*, throws herſelf at the Feet of *Jupiter*; the Gods aſſemble in Council, where ariſe Debates, their Spirits grow warm, and all Heaven is divided into Parties. The Cauſe is, that the Miſtreſs of *Achilles* is taken from him, which at the Bottom is but a Trifle. 'Tis by this great Art that all the Voyages, and indeed every Step that *Telemachus* made in the *Odyſſes* to ſeek his Father *Ulyſſes* became conſiderable, becauſe *Minerva* is of his *Retinue*, and of his *Council*. And al became remarkable by the Impreſſion they receiv'd from the Conduct of a Deity, that preſides over Wiſdom. 'Tis by this, in fine, that

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Virgil gives Greatneſs and Luſtre to the meaneſt Things he delivers. If *Æneas* break a Bough in the third of the *Æneids* to pay a pious Duty to a Tomb, that he finds accidentally in his Way, the Ghoſt of *Polydorus* ſpeaks to him from the bottom of the Tomb. If *Aruns* draw an Arrow in the eleventh Book, it is by the Direction of *Apollo*, who takes an Intereſt in it by that Means to kill *Camilla*. In ſhort, all that has Relation to the Gods, and their Miniſtry, ev'n to the leaſt Actions that are deſcrib'd in this Poem, to heighten the Luſtre of all that is done there in that marvellous Way, of which *Ariſtotle* gives ſuch admirable Leſſons.

But it is of the laſt Importance (as I have obſerv'd) that this *admirable* be *probable* by a juſt Mixture and Temperament of one and the other. For the *Heroic Action*, which the Poet propoſes to imitate, muſt be render'd not only worthy of *Admiration*, but alſo of *Credit*, to attain its End. The Poets are ordinarily carried to ſpeak *incredible* Things, while they too much aim at the Admirable, which they imprudently thruſt into the Fable, without minding the Truth; becauſe they would pleaſe, without taking care to perſwade; and they ſcarce ever think of the Preparations, and all the Colours of Decency that muſt be employ'd, on which to ground the *Verſimilitude*. And it is thus, that by a falſe Idea, which they have of Poeſy, they place its Beauty in the pleaſant Surprizes of ſomething extraordinarily wonderful, whereas it is not in Reality to be found but in what is *natural* and *probable*. For the ſure Way to the Heart, is not by ſurprizing the Spirit; and all becomes *incredible* in Poetry, that appears *incomprehenſible*. Few Poets, beſide *Virgil* and *Homer*, had the Art by the Preparation of Incidents to manage the Probability in all the Circumſtances of an Heroic Action; and *Homer* himſelf indeed cannot be own'd altogether ſo ſcrupulous and regular as *Virgil*, in his Contrivances. His Machines are leſs juſt, and all the Meaſures he takes to ſalve the *Probability* are leſs exact. Many Reflections

may

may be made in the Works both of the *Antients* and the *Moderns* on the Subject of this Obſervation. For the neceſſity of *Probability* is a great Check to the Poets, who think to make the Incidents the more *Heroic*, by how much the more wonderful and more ſurprizing they be, without regarding whether they be *natural* or not.

The ſovereign Perfection of an *Heroic Poem*, in the Opinion of *Ariſtotle*, conſiſts in the *juſt Proportion of all its Parts.* The *Marvellous* is that perfect Connection, that juſt Agreement, and the admirable Relation, that the Parts of this great Work have to each other; as the Perfection of a great Palace conſiſts in the Uniformity of the Deſign, and in the Proportion of the Parts. It is this Symmetry that *Horace* ſo much recommends in the beginning of his *Art of Poetry*; where he taxes the Ridiculouſneſs of the extravagant Diſproportions in the Pictures he ſpeaks of. As when *Dolphins are put into Foreſts, and Bears into the Sea.* And this Proportion which *Ariſtotle* requires, is not only in the *Quantity* of the Parts, but alſo in the *Quality.* In this Point *Taſſo* is very faulty, who in his Poem mixes the *Light* Character with the *Serious*, and all the Force and Majeſty of the *Heroic*, with the Softneſs and Delicacy of the *Paſtoral* and *Lyric Poeſy.* For the Shepherds Adventures with *Herminia*, in the ſeventh Canto; and the Letters of her Lover's Name, which ſhe carv'd in the Bark of Bays and Beeches; the Moan ſhe made to the Trees and Rocks, and purling Streams; the embroider'd Meadows, the ſinging of Birds, in which the Poet himſelf took ſo much Pleaſure: The enchanted Wood, in the thirteenth Canto; the Songs of *Armida* in the fourteenth, to inſpire *Rinaldo* with Love, the Careſſes this Sorcereſs made him, the Deſcription of her Palace, where nothing is breath'd but Softneſs and Effeminacy; and thoſe other affected Deſcriptions, have nothing of that Grave and Majeſtic Character, which is proper for an Heroic Poem. Thus *Sannazarius* and *Camoens* have

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mingled the Fables of Paganism with the Mysteries of the Christian Religion. It is not sufficient that all be great and magnificent in this Poem; all must likewise be just, uniform, and proportionable in the different Parts that compose it.

Tho' what my Friend LAUDON has offer'd (said I) may be sufficient to direct the Judgment in deciding on Performances of this nature, yet that there may be nothing wanting, give me Leave to add, that particular Rules are not so necessary to be dwelt on here; first, because these sorts of Poems are very rarely attempted; and next, because whoever can judge well of *Tragedy*, and determine whether it be good or bad, is qualify'd to judge of an *Heroic Poem*, for all the Parts of this are to be found in *Tragedy*; but all those of the Tragic Poem are not to be found in the Heroic. This Maxim is true in all *Arts*, since to judge aright of any Work, we ought perfectly to know all the parts of which it is compos'd. According to this Principle then, any Man who can judge well of a *Tragedy*, is capable of judging so of the *Heroic Poem*, for the former contains all that is in the latter. Thus in *Tragedy*, there are the *Fable*, the *Manners*, the *Diction*, and the *Affections*, or *Passions*. But then he who is a good Judge of the *Heroic Poem*, may not have Knowledge enough to be a good Judge of *Tragedy*, because there are in this some things which are not in that, as the *Unity of Time*, and Place, the Vivacity of the Passions, and the *Action* itself, the Heroic Poem being only a *Narration*.

The *Heroic Poem* has farther this in common with *Tragedy*, that it is a Discourse in Verse, and an Imitation of the Actions of the greatest Persons. It is not necessary that the *Action*, which is the Subject of either the *Heroic* or *Tragic Poem*, be illustrious and important in itself, but it must be so by the Quality of the Persons who act the Actions of Kings and Commanders, as *Horace* says. This is so true, that the most notable and excellent Action of any of a low Rank or Degree can never be the

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Subject of an *Heroic* or *Tragic* Poem, when the moſt indifferent one of a King or a General will be ſuch, and receiv'd with Applauſe.

They differ in this, that the *Heroic Poem* is a pure *Narration*, the *Tragic* is all Action. For there is nothing but *Action*, which can make a lively Repreſentation of the violent Paſſions which reign in *Tragedy*, while the other makes uſe only of a ſimple *Recital* without Actors; it is indeed a Poem more ſoft, and moderate, and made for Morality. Next, it has a larger Extent; but this difference proceeds from the ſame Cauſe, I have juſt mention'd. The Paſſions reign in *Tragedy*, ſo that Poem ought to be always ſhort, ſince nothing that is violent endures long. But Manners and Cuſtoms, which are not begun and finiſh'd at once, belong to the *Heroic Poem*, and by Conſequence its Action ought to have a larger Extent than that of *Tragedy*. For *Tragedy* ought to be confin'd at the utmoſt to twelve Hours, whereas there is no certain and determin'd Time fix'd for the Duration of the *Heroic Poem*. And this Length has been different, according to the Nature of the Action which it chooſes to imitate. Thus the *Ilias*, which is full of Violence and Paſſion, continues but forty-ſeven Days; the *Odyſſes* draws Wiſdom and Conduct, and therefore to that the ſame Poet allows eight Years and a half.

Virgil knew very well this Prudence and Wiſdom of the *Greek* Poet, for to the Action of the *Æneids*, whoſe Character is *Piety* and Good *Nature*, he gives ſeven Years.

But to come to a cloſer Application of the Rules of *Tragedy* to the *Heroic Poem*: The latter is particularly diſtinguiſh'd from the former, as being a *Narration* where the Poet generally ſpeaks himſelf; not but he frequently interrupts the ſimple *Narration* by making his Perſons ſpeak, as is plain from *Homer* and *Virgil*. But tho' the general Character of the Poem be thus different from the Tragic, yet in this they agree. In both, there

there are a *Fable*, *Manners*, *Sentiments*, and *Diction*. And the Rules that direct us in the forming a Dramatic Fable, will hold good in the forming that of an Heroic Poem. That of this laſt ought to imitate *one only Action*, entire, perfect, and finiſh'd, and which conſequently has a *Beginning*, *Middle*, and *End*. It muſt be active, like that of *Tragedy*; and the only difference between the Activeneſs of theſe two Poems, is, as I have obſerv'd, that *Traged* imitates without *Narration*, and the *Heroic* Poem with its Aſſiſtance; that is to ſay, that it does not bring Actors before the Spectator; it is the Poet only that ſpeaks; and the chief reaſon that he often makes his Perſons act and ſpeak themſelves, is, that he may give that Action to his Poem which it naturally and by its Definition requires. For this reaſon the Poet ought at firſt to form his Plan or Fable ſo, as to make it active; and therefore *Ariſtotle* juſtly condemns thoſe who ſearch Hiſtory for a Theme, before they have thus form'd the Fable.

I have ſaid, that the Imitation of an *Heroic Poem* is that of *one Action* only, and not of a great many; for ſhould it imitate many Actions, it would be a Hiſtory, and not a Poem. So that the Compoſition of the Incidents, the Connection which unites the Parts that make an *Heroic Poem*, ought not to be like that which unites the Parts of an Hiſtory. For in Hiſtory many Events are collected together, which have only a fortuitous Connection, and depend not on one another, but only by the Time in which they happen'd; whereas the Incidents of this Poem ought to be ſo link'd together, and incorporated one into the other, that they make *one* and the *ſame Action*. If a Poet ſhould make uſe of any Incident which was not a natural Part of his Fable, nor Matter proper for this ſort of Poem, it muſt be at leaſt neceſſary to give an Account of ſome Part of the Action. This is entirely oppoſite to the Rules of Hiſtory, and carries its own Evidence.

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But to illuſtrate this, I ſhall borrow an Example from *Ariſtotle* on this Head, that two different Actions, that have no Connection but of the Time in which they happen'd, cannot make *one*. *For* (ſays he) *if the Sea-Fight at* Salamine, *and the Battle with the* Carthaginians *in* Sicily, *which were about the ſame Time, have no relation to the ſame End, much leſs ſhall thoſe Things which fall out at different Times, and after one another, tend to the ſame Deſign.* This Compariſon is ſufficient to make us underſtand the Difference which is between the Incidents which come into an *Heroic Poem*, and thoſe which have place in an *Hiſtory*. Among the latter, thoſe which ſeem moſt alike, and are very near one another, are yet very different, and tend not to the ſame End. As in the Inſtance given of the Sea-Engagement at *Salamine*, where the *Grecians* beat *Xerxes*; and the Battle which *Gelon* gain'd in *Sicily* over the *Carthaginians*, commanded by *Amilcar*, which are ſaid to have both happen'd the ſame Day; yet is there nothing more different; for as they have not both of them the ſame Cauſe, ſo do they not concur to the ſame End. Since therefore there is ſo vaſt a difference between *Actions* which came to paſs in the ſame Hour, what muſt there be between thoſe which happen in ſeveral Ages? Farther give me leave to add, that if the falling out of two Actions at the ſame time made them one, then all the Actions which come to paſs in the World in one Day are the ſame, which would be highly ridiculous to aſſert. However, they all are admitted into Hiſtory, which does not confine itſelf to relate only one Action; but this would be abſurd in an *Heroic Poem*, into which thoſe Incidents can only enter, which when join'd together compoſe only One *whole*, and aim at the ſame Deſign.

I have obſerv'd that the Action of an *Heroic Poem*, as that of a Tragedy, ſhould be entire, and a perfect *Whole*. But this does not hinder but the Part of ſome particular Hiſtory may afford this Whole to this Poem; and *Ariſtotle* praiſes *Homer* as *Divine* in Compariſon of the

the other Poets, who had attempted this ſort of Poem; that when he had a War before him, which had a Beginning and an End, he did not pretend to treat of it entirely. For the *Anger* of *Achilles*, which that great Poet has taken for the Subject of his Poem, is a Part in reſpect of the *Trojan War*, and the Hiſtory from whence it is drawn, yet is it entire and finiſh'd in the Fable and Poem which he has form'd upon it. Nay, had he taken in the whole *Trojan War*, as the Author of the Little *Iliad* did, it cou'd never have preſerv'd the Unity of Action, which is eſſential to this Poem.

The Poet may take the entire Action of an Hiſtory, or one Part only, as it can be brought to agree with the foreſaid Unity; but he is always oblig'd to put an entire Action into his Poem, and not a Part. Thus HOMER in his *Odyſſes*, and *Virgil* in his *Æneids*, have taken an entire Action. The firſt propoſes the Return of *Ulyſſes*, who, after the Deſtruction of *Troy*, arrives in his own Country: VIRGIL propoſes the Change of a State, which was ruin'd in *Troy*, and re-eſtabliſh'd in *Italy* by *Æneas*. Each of theſe *Actions* is a *Whole*, as well in the Hiſtory from whence they are taken, as in the Fables in which they are made uſe of. But it is not the ſame in regard of the Action of the *Ilias*, for that is only one Part of the Hiſtory of the *War of Troy*, but it becomes a regular Whole in the Poem, by the good Management of the Poet; for that Anger of *Achilles* has its Cauſes, Effects, and End. And to ſhew that the *War of Troy* is not the Subject of the *Ilias*, the Poet ends his Poem with *Hector*'s Funeral, before the twelve Days of the Truce are expir'd, and the Fighting began again.

But then he draws many dependent Parts, which adorn his Poem, from that War; but ſo incorporates them, that they are a part of the Action he has choſen for his Subject.

Other Poets, among the Antients as well as Moderns, have diſcover'd their Ignorance of their Art, and the Want of this admirable Judgment ſo conſpicuous in Ho-

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MER and VIRGIL, while they have falsly imagin'd th
they could preserve the Unity of the Subject, by co
forming themselves to the Actions of one Man only.
the Authors of the *Heracleides*, the *Theseids*, and *Achilleid*
who have sung all the Actions of *Hercules*, *Theseus*, a
Achilles; but we have already seen that the Actions
one Man are as different from each other, and no mo
one, than all the Actions in the World could be, if cra
into the same Piece. Others have gone with an equ
Absurdity to write of all the Actions that happen'd in
certain space of Time; but it needs no Words to prov
that there can be no Unity in these sort of Poems, a
by Consequence, that they merit not the Name of *Her*
Poems, and are essentially, as well as the *Drama*, Imit
tions of *one Action only*.

To give a farther Light to this Matter, by which
may discern whether the Action preserve its Unity
not; *Aristotle* tells us, that the Plan or Fable of a
Heroic Poem can furnish but one or two Fables for
Tragedy, at most; and instances the *Ilias* and *Odysses*
Homer. It must be confess'd, that there is nothing
the Plan of the *Ilias* but may be very well put into
Tragedy, if we do but shorten the Time. All the *Gr*
cian Princes, tho' independent of one another, wer
united against the *Trojans*. *Agamemnon*, whom the
had elected their Chief, insults *Achilles*, who was th
most Valiant of all the Confederates. That Prince be
ing offended, retires with his *Myrmidons*, and refuses t
fight. This Misunderstanding gave a great Advantag
to the Enemies. *Achilles* suffers his Friend *Patroclus* t
assist the Allies on a very pressing Occasion; that Frien
is kill'd by *Hector*, and his Death inspires *Achilles* with
very eager Desire of Revenge, and so inclines him to b
reconcil'd to *Agamemnon*; he then goes to the Battle
and re-establishes the *Grecian* Affairs, gains a Victory fo
them, and revenges his Friend's Death, by killing
Hector with his own Hand.

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This is nothing but what may enter into a *Tragedy*. And by dividing the Matter, we may eaſily find two Subjects for a *Fable*. For we may bring on the Stage only the firſt Part of the Fable, *That Ambition and Diſcord ruine not only the People, but alſo the Princes themſelves who are divided.* And thus I ſhould only handle the Quarrel betwixt *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*, and the diſmal Effects of it, in ruining the *Grecian* Affairs, and cauſing the Death of *Patroclus*. We may likewiſe make another Tragedy on the ſecond Part of this *Fable*, which ſhews, that when a Miſunderſtanding was remov'd, a good Intelligence had re-eſtabliſh'd what that Diſcord had ruin'd.

I might thus go through the *Odyſſes*, and ſhew the ſame thing; but this is ſufficient for your underſtanding my Meaning. But I would have you obſerve this by the way, that when *Ariſtotle* ſays, the *Ilias* and *Odyſſes* will afford but one or two Subjects for Tragedy, he ſpeaks of the Plans of the ſimple Fables of thoſe Poems, ſtript of their additional and ornamental Parts; for by thoſe, theſe very Poems will afford many.

The Nature of *Tragedy*, and the *Narrative* or *Heroic Poem* being ſo near the ſame, it follows, that there are four ſorts of the latter, as well as of the former. Thus it may be either *ſimple* or *compound*, or *intricate*, or *moral*, or *paſſionate*. For there can be no Action imagin'd, which has not one of thoſe four Qualities. The *Heroic Poem* has farther all the Parts of Tragedy, (except the Muſic and Decorations, which in our Days the Poet has little to do with) for it has the *Fable*, *Manners*, *Sentiments*, and *Diction*; its *Changes of Fortune*, its *Diſcoveries*, its *Paſſions*; that is to ſay, Wounds, violent Deaths, *Pains*, *Griefs*, and the like, which are included under the Word *Paſſions*.

If therefore we ſhould examine the two Poems of *Homer* with Care and Exactneſs, we muſt, with *Ariſtotle*, allow, that the *Ilias* is *Simple* and *Paſſionate*, or (to uſe a Term of Art, now pretty well known) *Pathetic*, and the

the ODYSSES *Compound* and *Moral*. The *Ilias*, where Anger and Fury prevail, is *Simple* and *Pathetic*. It is plainly *Paſſionate* or Pathetic, becauſe we find every where in it Wounds, and Death; 'tis *Simple*, becauſe there is no *Change of Fortune* contrary to our Expectations, nor any *Diſcovery*. Two *Leaders* of the ſame ſide quarrel, who, after they had ſuffer'd much by their Diviſion, are reconcil'd again; one of theſe revenges the Death of his Friend, by killing with his own Hands, the Perſon who ſlew him. 'Tis evident that there is nothing in this, but what is *plain* and *ſimple*. I know it has been urg'd that there are *Changes of Fortune* in the *Ilias*, becauſe the Face of Affairs often alter'd; the *Greeks* ſometimes, and ſometimes the *Trojans* bearing off the Victory. But that which falls out according to the ordinary Courſe of the World, is never call'd a *Poetical Change of Fortune*; for elſe this would be in all Accidents.

The ODYSSES is *Compound* and *Moral*, becauſe it is a more ſedate and ſlow Poem, than that of the *Ilias*; being made for a Model or Example of Wiſdom, Moderation and Conſtancy. For it has many Poetical *Changes of Fortune* and *Diſcoveries*, and its Hero is an Example of Virtue. I am not ignorant but that it may here be objected, that the ODYSSES is likewiſe *Paſſionate* or *Pathetic*, ſince the Companions of ULYSSES are loſt, he himſelf ſuffers a great many Evils, and at laſt deſtroys his Enemies. In anſwer to this give me leave to put you in Mind, that in this, as in all Things elſe, the Denomination is taken from what is the principal, and moſt eſſential Nature of each of theſe Poems. *Simplicity* and *Paſſion* are the two Characters of the ILIAS, becauſe they Reign in it from one End to the other. 'Tis likewiſe confeſt, that this Poem has a Moral, as well as the other; but it is not call'd *Moral*, becauſe the Morality is leſs frequent and more hidden.

The Poetical *Changes of Fortune*, the *Diſcoveries* and *Morality*, are the eſſential Characters of the ODYSSES, and for this Reaſon 'tis call'd *Compound* and *Moral*; and tho'

ho' there be Slaughter, violent Death, and Wounds, it
not call'd Pathetic, becauſe thoſe Things take up but
very ſmall Part of the Poem, and are found rather in
he adventitious Parts, than in the principal Action.

This I think ſufficient to ſay of this Poem; for by
his, and a Recollection of what was ſaid the laſt Time
e met on *Tragedy*, a Man may form a right Judg-
ent of the Heroic Poem. If any of you have a Mind
o hear it more amply diſcuſs'd, *Boſſu* is in the *Engliſh*
ongue, and the only Critic worth peruſing on this
ubject. I had ſome Thoughts of comparing the *Heroic*
nd *Tragic* Poems, and of ſhewing which is the moſt
aluable. But *Ariſtotle* has given it to *Tragedy*, and I
m of Opinion, that *Gerard Voſſius* is far from anſwer-
ng the Reaſons of the *Philoſopher*, who had much a
ore fine and juſt Taſte of Poetry, than the *Dutch* Au-
hor has diſcover'd. It muſt be allow'd however, that
Voſſius was a Man of Merit, and a laborious Searcher
nto the Writers of Antiquity, both as to *Poetry* and
Rhetoric; and that to his Labours, ſome more happy
Writers have ow'd ſome valuable Diſcoveries.

I had likewiſe ſome Thoughts of diſcourſing on the Ex-
ellencies, and Defects of Stile, that is, of the Language,
r Poetic Diction in all its Extent. But ſince to come
o all the Particulars of that, we ſhould not only take
p too much Time, but alſo invade other Arts concern'd
n it, as *Grammar* and *Rhetoric*; I ſhall content my
elf here with ſome general Remarks, which will be
ufficient to guide any Perſon of Genius and Judgment;
nd for others, I know of nothing they have to do with
oetry at all.

The Expreſſion therefore, or Language ought to
ave five Qualities, to obtain all the Perfection, which
oetry demands. It muſt be *apt*, *clear*, *natural*, *ſplen-*
id and *numerous*. It muſt in the firſt place be *apt*, and
ave nothing impure or barbarous. For ſhould we ſpeak
hat is *great*, *noble* and *admirable*, all is deſpicable and
dious if the Purity be wanting. The greateſt Thoughts

that

that are, loſe the largeſt ſhare of their *Grace*, if t
Conſtruction be defective. Secondly, the *Langua*
muſt be clear, that it may be intelligible, for one of t
greateſt Faults in the Diction is *Obſcurity*. In this C
moens, whom the *Portugueze* call their VIRGIL,
culpable in the laſt degree; for his Verſes are ſo obſcur
that they may paſs for Myſteries or Riddles; and t
Thoughts of *Daute* are ſo profound, that they are n
to be penetrated, without a great deal of Art. W
may add Sir *William Davenant*, (if he be worthy o
Notice) who, by the Frequency of his *Parentheſis*, b
comes very much perplex'd and obſcure. Poetry deman
an Air much more clear, and leſs incomprehenſible.

The third Quality is, that it be *natural*, witho
Affectation, according to the Rules of Decorum, a
good Senſe. Studied Phraſes, and a too *florid Stile*, fi
Words, and Terms ſtrain'd and remote, and all extr
ordinary Expreſſions are unſupportable in true Poetr
Simplicity only pleaſes, provided it be ſuſtain'd wi
Greatneſs and *Majeſty*. But this *Simplicity* is n
known to any, but Souls truly elevated and great, t
Little Wits know nothing of it; 'tis indeed a Maſte
piece in Poeſy, and *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Dryden* o
ten, and *Milton*, diſtinguiſh themſelves by it. T
Ignorant hunt after *Wit* and *fine Things* (as they c
them) becauſe they are ignorant.

Fourthly, the *Language* muſt be *Lofty* and *Splendi*
for the common and ordinary Terms of the Mob, t
Canaille are by no Means proper for a Poet; he m
make uſe of Words that partake nothing of the *Ba*
and the *Vulgar*: They muſt be Noble and Magnificen
the Expreſſion ſtrong, and the Colours lively, t
Draught bold; his Diſcourſe ſhould be ſuch as may r
up to, and equal the Greatneſs of the Ideas of a Wo
man, who is the Creator of his own Work. I mea
not by ſuch gouty ſwoln Words, which are full
Sound and Noiſe, but ſuch as are at the ſame time e
preſſive, harmonious, and full of Energy.

T

*

The fifth Quality is, that they be *Numerous*, to uphold that Greatneſs and Majeſty, which reigns every where in Poetry; and to expreſs all the Force and Dignity of the great Things it ſpeaks. They muſt not be harſh, uncouth, and unfit for the Fluency of Verſe, but ſuch as may derive to that a moſt agreeable Harmony. Words that go off roundly from the Tongue, and at the ſame time fill the Ear, are thoſe which will render all Things admirable, as Poeſy requires. But it is not enough that the Expreſſions be Lofty and Great, they muſt alſo carry in them a particular *Heat* and *Vehemence*, and above all, there muſt ſhine through the whole Diſcourſe or Diction, a certain Grace and Delicacy, which forms the principal Ornament, and moſt obvious and univerſal Beauty.

But this ſublime Stile, is the Rock on which the Mean Wits always ſplit, they fly out into too vaſt and boiſtrous Terms from what is natural, where they aim at being ſublime and lofty. For this high and pompous Kind of Speech becomes vain and cold, if not ſupported with great Thoughts; and the great Words which are affected to heighten the Diction, moſt commonly only make a Noiſe. The Emperor *Nero*, who fancy'd himſelf a Wit, ran into this Character to ſuch an Extravagance, that he became the Subject of Railery to the Satiriſts of that Age. STATIUS, who had a better Genius, was fond of this Way in his Poems, affecting great Words and ſwelling Expreſſions. But as he ſwells into *Buſtian*, he fills the Ears without touching the Heart. The moſt eſſential Virtue of Speech, next to Clearneſs and Perſpicuity, is, that it be chaſte and modeſt; that is, there muſt be a Proportion between the Words and the Things; and nothing is more ridiculous than to treat a frivolous Subject in a ſublime Stile: For whatever wants Proportion, is either altogether falſe, or at leaſt *trifling* and *childiſh*.

I ſhall add but one Thing more to this Head, and that is from *Ariſtotle*, and what it would be well if

ſome of our Tragedy-Writers would very well conſider and that is, the *Uniformity* of Stile, than which nothing can be more curious. To have a ſort of Scribblers (I will not call them Poets, how ſucceſsful ſoever they may be) who are ſo very fond of what they call fine Language, that they croud their pompous Expreſſions equally into all Parts of their Poem. *Boileau* has juſtly cenſur'd this, and the truly great Poets of any Country were never guilty of it.

We ought, ſays *Ariſtotle*, to reſerve all the Ornaments of the Diction for the weaker Parts of the Poem, for thoſe which have either good *Sentiments*, or *Manners*, have no occaſion for them; and I may add, that when they are obtruded on the Paſſions, they deſtroy them. I remember Mrs. *Barry* has told me, that ſhe never pronounced thoſe three Words in the ORPHAN, *Ah! poor Caſtalio*, without Tears. The Words are plain, ſimple, and natural, and therefore touch and move in that manner; whereas, had ſome of our more Modern Tragic Writers been to draw that Place, we had had half a dozen pompous Verſes, if not a *Simile*, to have ſmother'd the Paſſion.

Brilliant and Noble Expreſſions (ſays *Ariſtotle*) are detrimental to the Sentiments and Manners, and only hide and obſcure their Beauty. In the Infancy of Poetry (ſays the Excellent *Dacier* on this place) they did not perceive this Truth, that the Ornaments of the *Diction* offended the Sentiments, and obſcured the Manners. For the firſt Poets were dazled with the Beauties of the Art, and prodigal of them without any Reſerve; they were always *florid*, and never ſaid any thing in a *plain manner*; 'and *for this reaſon, there are ſcarce any* Manners *in their Pieces*; *and the Thoughts are ſo loaden with the Ornaments of* Diction, *that they hide them ſo much that they are not without very great Difficulty diſtinguiſh'd.* The Poets who came after them, perceiving this Fault, quitted that elaborate Language, and kept to a more ſimple and natural way of ſpeaking. I muſt

need

eeds ſay, that we have had but few taking *Tragedies*, here the Perſons ſpeak ſimply and ordinarily according the Nature of the Scene, or thē Paſſion repreſented. ur Poets endeavour to uſe all the Flowers of Rhetoric, d ſo become rather Declamers, than Poets or Actors. om hence it proceeds, that we find ſo much falſe uſtre, and the Manners ſeldom well mark'd; for there nothing more contrary to Manners, and the Sentiments, an a ſwelling and lofty Stile.

There is, indeed, a particular *Rhetoric* for *Poetry*, for hich we ſhould conſult the Antients, ſince very few of e Modern Poets at all underſtand it; this Art conſiſts diſcerning very preciſely what ought to be *figuratively* preſs'd, and what *ſimply*; and in knowing well when naments are requir'd, and where they are not of uſe, d add no Beauty. TASSO did not well underſtand this ecret; he is too gay and too polite in places where the ravity of the Subject demanded a more ſimple and ſe-ous Stile. As for Example——Where *Tancrede* ap-oaches the Tomb of *Clorinda*, he makes the unfortu-te Lover, who came from ſlaying his Miſtreſs in a ortal Duel, utter *Points*, inſtead of expreſſing his Sor-w naturally: And this Fault he is guilty of in ſeveral her places. Thus GUARINI, in his *Paſtor Fido*, and ONARELLI, in his *Phillis*, commit often the ſame Blun-r, always employing their Invention how to ſpeak ittily, rather than naturally. This is the moſt ordi-ry Rock on which the *mean Wits* ſplit, who ſuffer eir Fancies to purſue the pleaſing Images which they d in their Way; they ruſh into Deſcriptions of Groves, ivers, Fountains, and Temples, which *Horace* juſtly, in s *Art of Poetry*, condemns as childiſh. It is indeed on-the Talent of Great Men, to know when to ſpeak, d when to be ſilent; to be florid, and to be plain; to lofty, and to be low; to uſe Figures, and to ſpeak pply; to mingle Fiction and Ornament, as the Subject quires. Finally, to manage all well in his Subject, thout pretending to give Delight where he ſhould on-

ly inſtruct, and without riſingin great Thoughts, wher natural and common Sentiments are neceſſary. A ſimpl Thought in its proper place, is of greater Value than a the moſt exquiſite Words and Wit out of ſeaſon. Fancy which is all the Wit of common Writers, apprehend not this; for this Diſcernment, and this particular Rhe toric, which is proper to Poetry, is a pure Effect of Judg ment.

This is what I had to offer on this Head. I hop I have made myſelf underſtood by the Company, an given ſufficient Directions to Hearers ſo ſenſible. I can not conclude without ſome Reflections on the Verſifica tion; for tho' there be nothing ſo common now a ſmooth flowing Verſe; yet even that Smoothneſs is no without its Enemies, as breeding, by the perpetual *Sam neſs* of the Sounds and Quantities, a ſpeedy Satiet which Men truly skill'd in Numbers, will not be guil of. Let us firſt hear what his Grace of *Buckingham* ſay on this Head, whom we have heard ſpeak ſo admirabl on all the more important Parts of Poeſy, in his incom parable *Eſſay* ſo often quoted. It is towards the Begi ning.

Number and Rime, and that harmonious Sound,
Which never does the Ear with Harſhneſs wound,
Are neceſſary, yet but vulgar Arts.

The ESSAY, before it proceeds to the particul Rules of the ſeveral Branches of the Art of Poetr tranſiently touches on thoſe Things which are comm to all, as *Number*, and *Rime*, &c. which with the u moſt Juſtice he calls *Vulgar Arts*, becauſe, tho' in ſom meaſure neceſſary, yet conſiſting in Sound more th Senſe, are far from the Excellence of the eſſential Par Beſides, theſe may be obtain'd, and we find are pra tis'd in our Days by Men of little Genius in the mo important Parts of this glorious Art.

T

The Deſign of Poetry being *Profit* with *Pleaſure*, it mits nothing that may contribute to that End, and herefore makes uſe of *Numbers* and *Harmony*, becauſe ey are naturally delightful.

Give me Leave (ſaid MANILIA) to aſk what you have o do with Numbers in the *Engliſh Tongue*? ſince ſome ho have undertaken to write on this Art, aſſure us, at there is no ſuch thing in our Language.

Pray, good Madam (aſſum'd LAUDON) what wiſe eachers of this Art have you met with, who cou'd adance a Poſition as falſe as fooliſh?

Ah! dear Mr. LAUDON (reply'd MANILIA) have a are of what you ſay, becauſe the *Art of Engliſh Poetry*, hich has ſold a great many Impreſſions, ſhews you how make harmonious Verſes, without *Numbers*, or *Quanties*, which he poſitively denies to be in the *Engliſh ongue*; and yet he affirms, that his Rules are drawn om the *Practice* and *Example* of the Poets, that are oſt celebrated for a *fluent* and *numerous* Turn of erſe.

LAUDON could not forbear laughing at the obvious lunder of *Numerous Verſe*, without *Numbers*. But aid he) this Aſſertion of his is ſo plainly abſurd and lſe, that there is ſcarce a Man who ever wrote a ouplet, but muſt be ſenſible of it. He, indeed, endeaours (for I have caſt my Eye over this notable *Scription*) reſolve it all into *Accent*, (of which there is now ve little uſe in any Language but *Greek*, not even in the *atin* itſelf) but on what Ground, I cannot diſcover, nleſs it be on his own Miſapprehenſion of a Verſe in y Lord ROSCOMMON's *Eſſay on tranſlated Verſe*; or ther from the Meſſieurs of *Port-Royal*, in their Rules of *rench* Poetry, from whence he has borrow'd all he adances, and applies it very ignorantly and falſely to that the *Engliſh*. But the very Inſtances he gives at the ttempts made at *Hexameters*, or Verſes of ſix Feet, ompos'd of long and ſhort Syllables, after the manner the *Greeks* and *Latins*, and other Modes of the

Verſification of thoſe Tongues, deſtroys his Poſition and let any one but look into Sir PHILIP SIDNEY *Arcadia*, and he will find, that tho' the particular Manner of *Greeks*, and the *Romans* did not prevail in Uſe, yet that it was not for want of Variety of *Numbers* in our native Tongue.

Does it follow (aſſum'd I) that becauſe common Uſage has neglected thoſe early Attempts for their Difficulty the Practice, and obſerve not the very ſame Poſitions the *ſhort* and the *long* Syllables in the Feet, which the *Greeks* and the *Romans* obſerv'd in theirs, that, therefore we have no Quantities, and that an *Engliſh Verſe* may be made without any regard to the *Length* or the *Shortneſs* of the Syllables? This would baniſh Proſe entirely, and make every ten Syllables an *Heroic* Verſe than which nothing can be more falſe and abſurd.

He ſhould (aſſum'd LAUDON) have let us know what he means by the Word *Accents*, when he makes it a Term of Art, and lays ſuch a ſtreſs upon it. The *Gracians* had three *Accents*, the *Acute*, the *Grave*, and the *Circumflex*; the *Acute* and the *Circumflex* rais'd the Voice tho' in a different Manner and Degree, and the *Grave* lower'd it. Beſides the true and the antient Uſe of *Accents* is now ſo little known, that nothing of certainty can be ſaid of them; but if our Knowledge of them were equal to that of the *Romans*, when both *Greek* and *Latin* were living Languages, we could be no more able now, than QUINTILIAN was in his Time, to give Rules for them to the Eye; ſince they chiefly depended on the Ear. It is true, we retain the Names and Signatures of them in *Latin*, but we have not in *Engliſh* ſo much as that uſe of them.

If the *Art of Pronunciation* was brought to Perfection, perhaps there might be a Means found out to reach the *Loudneſs*, and *Softneſs* of the Voice (ſo neceſſary to the harmonious and pathetic Way of *Utterance*) as well as the *high* and the *low*, which is expreſs'd in the Notes of prickt Muſic, as well as the *long* and the *ſhort*

as in the Marks of the ſeveral Quantities in our common *Proſodias*. This Author indeed ſeems to run into an Error common to ſome others, who confound the Variating of the Voice; of *high*, *low*, *long*, *ſhort*, *loud* and *ſoft*; tho' they are all of a different Nature and Effect; as may be ſeen in the following Example of a very learned and very ingenious Author.

" They are as different (ſays he) as the Beats of a " *Drum* are from the Sounds of a *Trumpet*; and the " reading in *one*, equal and unvaried Tone is from ſing- " ing. All the poſſible Diverſity of *Poetic Feet*, and " the Changes of *loud* and *ſoft* are to a Wonder ex- " preſs'd by the Drum; but while there is a *Monotony* " or *Sameneſs* of *Tone* in the Sound, there can be no " place for Accent. This plain Inſtrument does indeed " ſhow us what a Power there is in *Muſical Num-* " *bers*, and in the various Movements of *Poetic Feet*; " how the Ear is affected with the ſudden intermixture " of *loud* and *ſoft* Notes. But let the *Trumpet* tell " how far ſhort all theſe are of well tun'd, and rightly " plac'd *Accents*. In theſe conſiſt the Life of Language; " theſe being Enchantments, which the being skilfully ap- " plied to well choſen Words lead all the Paſſions captive, " and ſurprize the Soul itſelf, in its innermoſt Receſſes.

But tho' this tranſporting Harmony of ſpeaking be loſt, yet we may ſee from hence, that it is plain, that *Accents* belong'd to the reading or ſpeaking Part, but *Numbers* to the Compoſition; that the Rules of Accents are obſcure and uncertain; but thoſe of Numbers known and agreed on. Hence it is likewiſe plain, that your Author of the *Art* of *Engliſh Poetry* knows nothing himſelf of what he yet pretends to teach others.

As to the Feet (ſays the forequoted Author) that moſt prevail in *Engliſh* Poetry, it is obſervable, that tho' our Words in common ſpeaking do generally run in the Meaſure of the *Trochee*, *Dactyl*, firſt *Paon*, or *Trochaeopirtric*, all which move from *long* to quicker Time; yet in Verſe, we moſt of all affect the contray Motion

of the *Iambic:* and tho' in moſt of our Compoſitions other Feet are commonly intermixt, yet the briſker C dence of the *Iambic* ſo over-rules them all, that the ſcarce become perceptible.

You now do like a Critic (interrupted MANILIA confound us with Words, which we do not unde ſtand; for you might as well talk to me in the Jargo of the *Gypſies*, as in this of the *Schools*.

Pardon me Madam, (reply'd LAUDON) you may a ſure yourſelf, that I deſign'd to explain the Meaning o thoſe Words to you, leſt I ſhould miſs of that Glory propoſe to myſelf, of rendring my Conviction of you Ladyſhip complete, and of giving you that Taſte of a Parts of true *Criticiſm*, that you might not be only th faireſt of your Sex, but alſo the moſt knowing in an Ar ſo much pretended to, and yet ſo little underſtood i our Age.

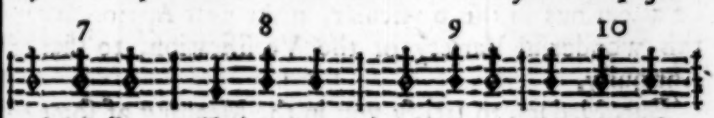
Ah! LAUDON (aſſum'd MANILIA) you are th moſt complaiſant of all Men living; but I have this Sa tisfaction, that how much ſoever I do fall ſhort of th reſt of my Sex in Beauty, I ſhall not be behind man of them in Knowledge, if I retain and improve you Inſtructions. But Compliments apart. I pray proceed i your Diſcourſe, which will be more edifying I am ſure and if you will believe a Woman declaring againſt Flat tery, more agreeable likewiſe to your humble Servant.

The Antients therefore (continu'd LAUDON) yo muſt know, Madam, out of the ſingle Difference of *long* and a ſhort Syllable, produc'd ſuch a Variety o *Numbers*, that gave their Verſification the moſt agree able, I may ſay the moſt delightful Sound in the World To this End they made their *Poetic* Feet conſiſt not o two Syllables only, (as ours are thought to do) bu ſometimes of two, ſometimes of three, and in Com pounds of four, which were thus diverſify'd; a *ſhort* and a *long*; a *long*, and a *ſhort*; *two ſhort*, and *two long*; *one long* and *two ſhort*; *two ſhort* and *one long three ſhort*, and *three long*: *One ſhort* between *two long*

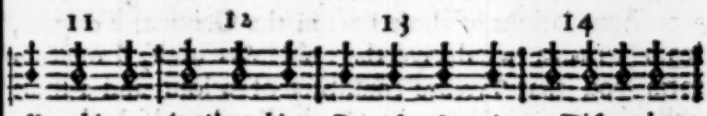
one

one long in the midſt of *two ſhort*; *one ſhort* and *two long*; *two long* and *one ſhort*; *four ſhort*; *four long*; *two ſhort* and *two long* intermixt, the firſt being *ſhort*, and the laſt *long*. This again inverted the firſt and laſt, but one being *long*, the other two *ſhort*; the firſt and laſt *long*, and the intermediate *two ſhort*. But, Madam, it would be tedious to you to hear a bare Repetition of theſe Variations, which amount to no leſs than twenty eight in the *Greek* and *Latin*; I ſhall therefore confine them to your Eye under Muſical Notes, which you underſtand, adding their antient Names to each Foot.

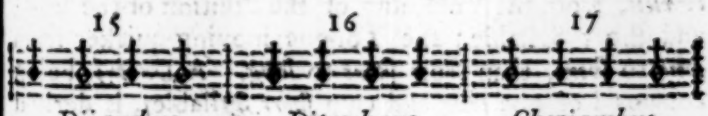
Pyrrich. Spondee. Iambic. Trochee. Dactyl. Anapaſt.



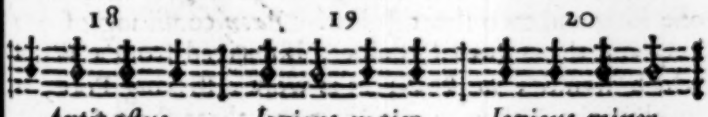
Moloſſus. Tribrachus. Amphimacer. Amphibrachus.



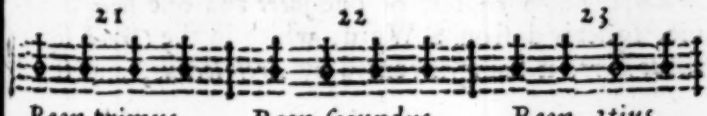
Bacchius. Antibacchius. Proceleuſmaticus. Diſpondaus.



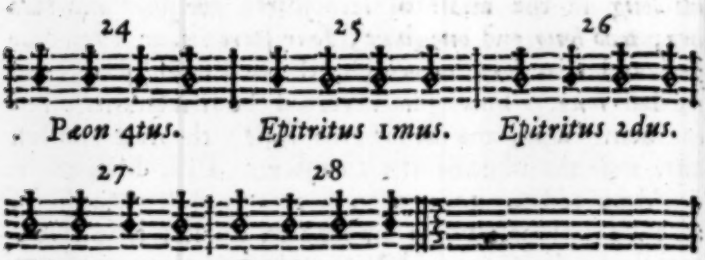
Dijambus. Ditrochaus. Choriambus.



Antipaſtus. Ionicus major. Ionicus minor.



Paon primus. Paon ſecundus. Paon 3tius.



Pæon 4tus. *Epitritus 1mus.* *Epitritus 2dus.*

Epitritus 3ius. *Epitritus 4tus.*

All theſe Variations of a long, and a ſhort Syllable did the Application and Induſtry of the antient Poets find out, to give an agreeable Variety to their Numbers. But it being evident, that the *Engliſh* Language, as well as the *Greek* and *Latin*, conſiſts of *long* and *ſhort* Syllables; it is as evident, that our Poets may, if they wou'd be as curious in this particular, make near Approaches to this wonderful Variety of the Verſification, to that of Antiquity.

But, Madam, to ſatisfy you in the Meaning of ſome of thoſe hard Words I have made uſe of, as being the common Appellations of thoſe Feet in the Original Tongues, from whence we derive the noble Art itſelf, I muſt inform you that *Trochee* conſiſting of a long and a ſhort Syllable, is deriv'd from a *Greek* Word, which ſignifies *to run*, from the Volubility of the Poſition of the long, and ſhort Syllable; the Tongue moving quicker from *long* to *ſhort*, than from *ſhort* to *long*. A *Dactyl*, being compos'd of one *long* and two *ſhort* Syllables, is deriv'd from a *Greek* Word which ſignifies a *Finger*, which has one long and two ſhort Joints. *Pæon* conſiſting of one long and three ſhort Syllables, is derived from a Word which ſignifies *to ſtrike*, as it were a ſtriking Foot, as ſtriking the Ear with one long and three ſhort Sounds. *Iambic*, which conſiſts of one *ſhort* and one *long* Syllable, is deriv'd from a Word, which in the *Greek* ſignifies *to hurt*, it being invented by *Archilochus*, and fitted by

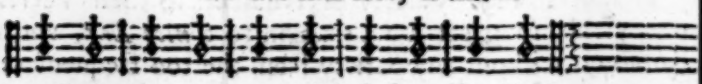
by him to his biting Satires. But enough of theſe Derivations of little uſe to us or to you.

We might here add (aſſum'd I) at leaſt twenty five various Mixtures of theſe twenty eight different kinds of Feet, each of which gives a different Denomination to the Verſe; either from the number of the Feet, as *Hexameters* and *Pentameters*, that is, Verſes conſiſting of ſix or of five Feet; or from the Name of the Poet that invented them, as *Aſclepiads* from *Aſclepiades*; *Glyconic* from *Glycon*; *Alcmanic* from *Alcmannus*; *Alcaic* from *Alcæus*; and ſo of the reſt, conſiſting of five, four, three, or two of the before enumerated Feet; which gives that ſtrange Variety of Numbers to their Verſes, that yields ſo great a Satisfaction to a *nice Ear*, and a Harmony without any Satiety from the too frequent return of the ſame Numbers and Cadence.

But I fear we have already tir'd your Patience, Madam, in leading you into a Country wholly unknown to you; and where to find the Way, and take any Pleaſure, you muſt lend ſo neceſſary an Attention to what may perhaps ſeem very trifling to a fair Lady, who has more gay Thoughts to entertain her, eſpecially when we remember that his *Grace* calls this when obtain'd, but a vulgar Art; yet the *neceſſary* which he adds, implies that this alſo ought to be ſtudied, and perfectly underſtood, to arrive at that Perfection in Numbers of which our Verſification is capable: In which, if we cannot come up to the Excellence that the Antients had by the Advantage of their Language, becauſe the Nature of ours has ſo intermixt the *ſhort* and the *long* in Words of more than one Syllable, that we ſeldom find two *long*, and not frequently two *ſhort* together. But yet I believe that this may in ſome Meaſure be ſupplied by the number of our Monoſyllables, which in Verſe generally ſpeaking are doubtful, and by Poſition or Emphaſis become long or ſhort; tho' ſome are always ſhort, and others always long.

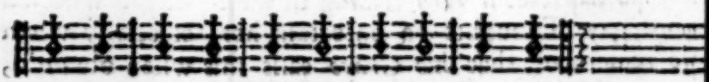
Mr. DRYDEN has made the greateſt Progreſs in this (aſſum'd LAUDON) of any Poet we have yet ſeen, (unleſs *Milton* may be allow'd to be his Rival in that particular) both in his *Heroic* and *Lyric* Compoſitions. But firſt of his *Heroics*. It is a general Rule, that an Heroic Verſe in *Engliſh*, ſhould conſiſt of five *Iambics*, that is, Madam, of five ſhort and five long Syllables intermix'd and divided into Feet, of a ſhort and a long Syllable each Foot; yet Mr. DRYDEN has frequently deviated with wonderful Beauty from this Rule, and by that gain'd a very conſiderable Advantage to his Verſification.

Of the firſt ſort, is this—



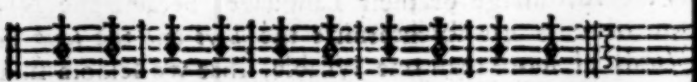
His Paſſion caſt a Miſt before his Senſe.

But this he varies, by beginning the Verſe ſometimes with what they call a *Trochee* or *long* and ſhort Syllable—as———



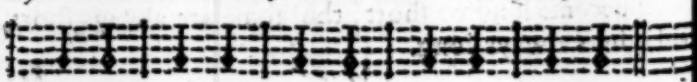
Raging with high Diſdain repeats the Blow.

Or with a Spondee or *two long* Syllables, follow'd by a *Pyrrich* or Foot of two ſhort Syllables, and the reſt *Iambics*; as,



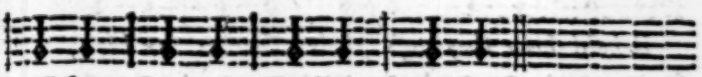
Huge Cantlets of his Buckler ſtrew the Ground.

Sometimes with an *Iambic* in the firſt Place, and a *Pyrrich* in the ſecond, and in the fourth; as,

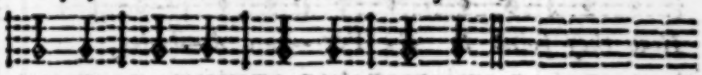


And Cha—ri—ty it ſelf was in his Face.

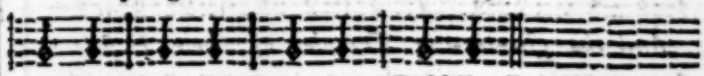
Next as to his *Lyrics*, I ſhall ſhow a much greater Variety of Numbers, or Change, or Intermixture of Quantities, as in his *Alexander's* Feaſt.



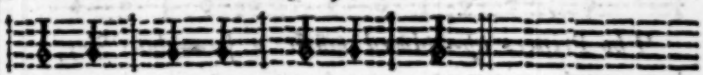
Softly Sweet in Lydian *Meaſures,*



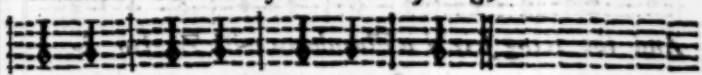
War he ſung was Toil and Trouble,



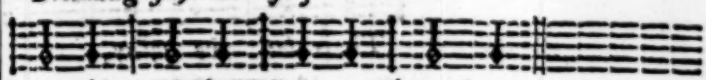
Honour but an emp--ty Bubble, &c.



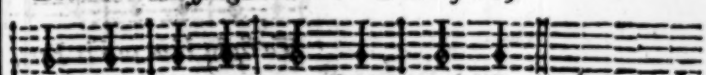
Bacchus *ev--er fair and young,*



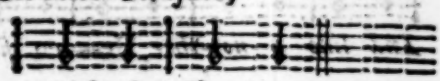
Drinking Joys did firſt or--dain.



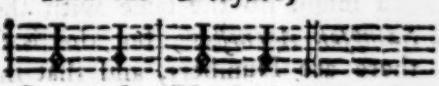
Bacchus *Bleſſings are a Trea--ſure,*



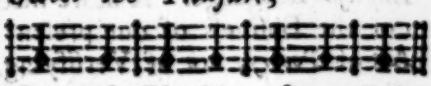
Drinking is the Sol-diers Pleaſure,



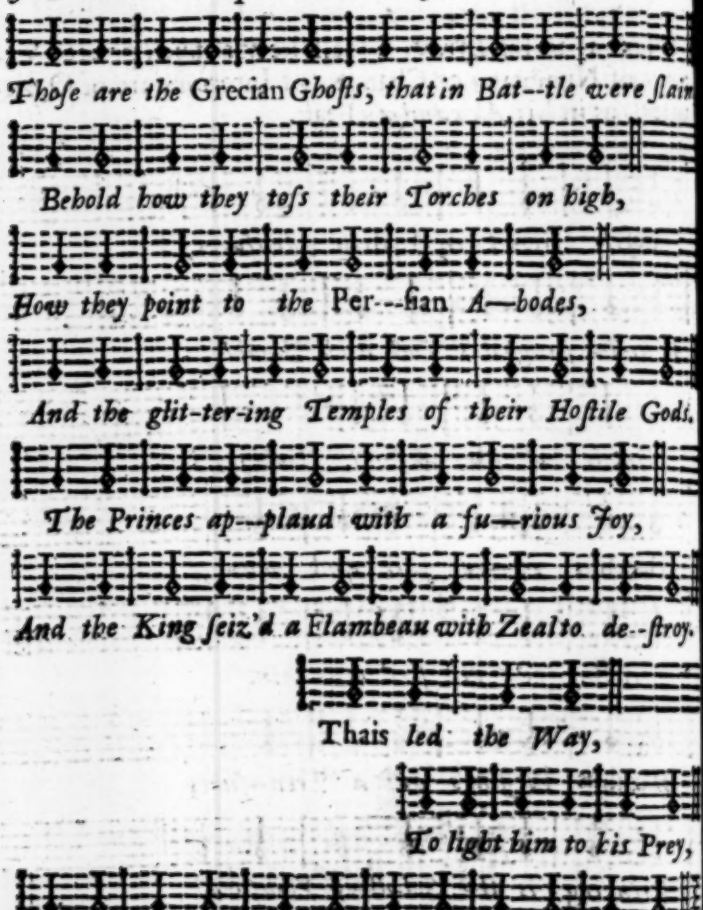
Rich the Treaſure,



Sweet the Pleaſure,



Sweet the Pleaſure af--ter Pain.



I might do the ſame with the Chorus's of *Milton's Sampſon Ageniſtes*; but this is ſufficient to ſhow that there are Numbers, and that in a great Variety in the *Engliſh* Language. A more nice Diſquiſition of this is not the Buſineſs of our preſent Enquiry, which is the Art of *Poetry*, not of Verſifying.

Here,

Here, my Friend *Crites*, the Company broke up, and I now ſend you this fifth Dialogue, which compleats my Poetical Syſtem, and which no Body but yourſelf can improve; and that you may do ſo, is the Reaſon of my troubling you with theſe Papers.

I ſhall ſoon call on you for your Corrections; for I am at laſt perſuaded to publiſh theſe Diſcourſes, in hopes, if poſſible, to cure our abandon'd Taſte of *Poetry*; and remove that Ignorance of the Art, which is the Cauſe of that bad Taſte.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

FInding the Inimitable *Shakeſpear* rejected by ſome Modern Collectors for his Obſolete Language, and having lately run over this great Poet, I could not but preſent the Reader with a Specimen of his Deſcriptions, and Moral Reflections, to ſhew the Injuſtice of ſuch an Obloquy. I might have been more large, for he abounds in Beauties; but theſe are ſufficient to evince the Falſhood of their Imputation.

Shakeſpeariana:

OR

Select Moral Reflections, Topicks, Similies, and Deſcriptions from SHAKESPEAR.

Confinement for Love.

MY Father's loſs, the Weakneſs which I feel,
The Wrack of all my Friends, and this (Man's Threats,
To whom I am ſubdu'd, are but light to me,
Might I but through my Priſon once a Day
Behold this Maid: All Corners elſe o'th' Earth
Let Liberty make uſe of; Space enough
Have I, in ſuch a Priſon. *Ferd. in the Tempeſt.*

Deſcription of Swimming in a Storm.

I ſaw him beat the Surges under him,
And ride upon their Backs; he trod the Water,
Whoſe Enmity he flung aſide; and breaſted

The

The Surge moſt ſwollen that met him: His bold Head
'Bove the contentious Waves he kept, and oared
Himſelf with his good Arms in luſtry Strokes
To th' Shore; that o'er his wave-born Baſis bow'd
As ſtooping to relieve him. *Sebaſtian. Ibid.*

Humane Nature.

Theſe are Actors,
As I foretold you, were all Spirits, and
Are melted into Air, into thin Air;
And like the baſeleſs Fabrick of their Viſion,
The cloud-capt Towers, the gorgeous Palaces,
The ſolemn Temples, the great Globe it ſelf,
Yea, all which it inherit, ſhall diſſolve,
And, like this in ſubſtantial Pageant faded,
Leave not a Wrack behind; we are ſuch Stuff
As Dreams are made on, and our little Life
Is rounded with a Sleep. *Proſp. Ibid.*

Againſt ſlighted Love.

To be in Love, where Scorn is bought with Groans,
Coy Looks, with Heart-ſore ſighs; one fading Moment's [Mirth,
With twenty watchful, weary tedious Nights,
If haply won, perhaps an hapleſs Gain:
If loſt, why then a grievous Labour won;
However, but a Folly bought with Wit,
Or elſe a Wit by Folly vanquiſh'd. *Valent. two Gent. of Verona.*

Woman's diſſembled Love.

Fie, fie; how wayward is this fooliſh Love,
That like a Teſty Babe will ſcratch the Nurſe,
And preſently, all humbled, kiſs the Rod?
How churliſhly I chid *Lucetta* hence,
When willingly I would have had her here?
How angerly I taught my Brow to frown,
When inward Joy enforc'd my Heart to ſmile? *Jul. Ib.*

Of Love.

Oh, how this Spring of Love reſembleth
Th' uncertain Glory of an *April* Day,
Which now ſhews all the Beauty of the Sun,
And by and by a Cloud takes all away! *Proth. Ib.*

Contempt of Love puniſh'd.

I have done Penance for contemning Love,
Whoſe high imperious Thoughts have puniſh'd me
With bitter Faſts, with penitential Groans,
With nightly Tears and daily heart-ſore Sighs;
For in revenge of my Contempt of Love,
Love hath chac'd Sleep from my enthralled Eyes,
And made them Watchers of mine own Heart's Sorrow.
O gentle *Protheus*! Love's a mighty Lord,
And hath ſo humbled me, as I confeſs
There is no Woe to his Correction;
Nor to his Service, no ſuch Joy on Earth. *Valent. Ib.*

Oppoſition enrages.

The Current, that with gentle Murmur glides,
Thou know'ſt, being ſtop'd, impatiently doth rage;
But when his fair Courſe is not hindered,
He makes ſweet Muſic with th' enamel'd Stones,
Giving a gentle Kiſs to every Sedge,
He overtaketh in his Pilgrimage:
And ſo by many winding Nooks he ſtrays,
With willing Sport, to the wild Ocean. *Julia. Ibid.*

Gifts win Women.

Win her with Gifts, if ſhe reſpects not Words;
Dumb Jewels often in their ſilent kind,
More than quick Words, do move a Woman's Mind.
Val. Ibid.

Baniſh-

Baniſhment of a Lover is Death.

And why not Death, rather than living Torment?
To die, is to be baniſh'd from myſelf,
And *Silvia* is myſelf; baniſh'd from her
Is ſelf from ſelf: A deadly Baniſhment!
What Light is Light, if *Silvia* be not ſeen?
What Joy is Joy, if *Silvia* be not by?
Unleſs it be to think that ſhe is by,
And feed upon the Shadow of Perfection.
Except I be by *Silvia* in the Night,
There is no Muſic in the Nightingale:
Unleſs I look on *Silvia* in the Day,
There is no Day for me to look upon:
She is my Eſſence, and I leave to be,
If I be not by her fair Influence
Foſter'd, illumin'd, cheriſh'd, kept alive. *Val. Ibid.*

Hope.

Hope is a Lover's Staff, walk hence with that,
And manage it againſt deſpairing Thoughts. *Proth. Ib.*

Virtue muſt be ſeen.

Heav'n doth with us, as we with Torches do,
Not light them for themſelves: For if our Virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd,
But to fine Iſſues; nor Nature never lends
The ſmalleſt Scruple of her Excellence,
But like a thrifty Goddeſs, ſhe determines
Herſelf the Glory of a Creditor,
Both Thanks and Uſe.

Duke. Meaſure for Meaſure.

Mercy.

Mercy.

May call it back again: Well, believe this,
No Ceremony that to great ones belongs,
Not the King's Crown, nor the deputed Sword,
The Marſhal's Truncheon, nor the Judge's Robe,
Become them with one half ſo good a Grace
As Mercy does. *Iſab. Ibid.*

The Vanity of Power in Men.

Could great Men thunder,
As *Jove* himſelf does, *Jove* would ne'er be quiet;
For every pelting petty Officer
Would uſe his Heav'n for Thunder;
Nothing but Thunder. Merciful Heav'n!
Thou rather with thy ſharp and ſulphurous Bolt
Split'ſt the unwedgable and gnarled Oak,
Than the ſoft Myrtle: O but Man! proud Man!
Dreſt in a little brief Authority,
Moſt ignorant of what he's moſt aſſur'd,
His glaſſie Eſſence, like an angry Ape,
Plays ſuch fantaſtic Tricks before high Heav'n,
As makes the Angels weep; who with our Spleens
Would all themſelves laugh mortal. *Iſab. Ibid.*

The Privilege of Greatneſs and Power.

We cannot weigh our Brother with our ſelf;
Great Men may jeſt with Saints; 'tis Wit in them;
But in the leſs, foul Prophanation. *Iſab. Ibid.*

On the ſame.

That in the Captain's but a cholerick Word,
Which in the Soldier is flat Blaſphemy. *Iſab. Ibid.*

Authority.

Authority.

Becauſe Authority, tho' it err like others,
Hath yet a kind of Medicine in itſelf,
That ſkins the Vice o' th' top: Go to your Boſom,
Knock there, and ask your Heart what it doth know
That's like my Brother's Fault; if it confeſs
A natural Guiltineſs, ſuch as is his,
Let it not ſound a Thought upon your Tongue
Againſt my Brother's Life. *Iſab. Ibid.*

The Force of Beauty.

What's this? What's this? Is this her Fault, or mine?
The Tempter, or the tempted, who ſins moſt? Ha?
Not ſhe; nor doth ſhe tempt; but it is I,
That, lying by the Violet in the Sun,
Does as the Carrion does, not as the Flower,
Corrupt with virtuous Seaſon. Can it be,
That Modeſty may more betray our Senſe,
Than Woman's Lightneſs? *Angelo. Ibid.*

Simile.

The State whereon I ſtudied,
Is like a good thing, being often read,
Grown fear'd, and tedious. *Ang. Ibid.*

Place and Form.

Oh Place! Oh Form!
How often doſt thou with thy Caſe, thy Habit,
Wrench Awe from Fools, and tie the wiſer Souls
To thy falſe ſeeming? *Ang. Ibid.*

A Simile on the Preſence of the Belov'd.

Oh Heav'ns!
Why does my Blood thus muſter to my Heart,
Making it both unable for itſelf,
And diſpoſſeſſing all my other Parts
Of neceſſary fitneſs?
So play the fooliſh Throngs with one that ſwoons;
Come all to help him, and ſo ſtop the Air
By which he ſhould revive; and even ſo
The general Subjects to a well-wiſh'd King
Quit their own part, and in obſequious Fondneſs
Crowd to his Preſence, where their untaught Love
Muſt needs appear Offence. *Angelo. Ibid.*

Womens Frailty.

Aye, as the Glaſſes where they view themſelves!
Which are as eaſie broke, as they make Forms.
Women! Help Heav'n; Men their Creation mar
In profiting by them. Nay, call us Ten times frail;
For we are ſoft, as our Complexions are,
And credulous to falſe Prints. *Iſab. Ibid.*

Unequal Privilege of Power.

O perilous Mouths,
That bear in them one and the ſelf-ſame Tongue,
Either of Condemnation or Approot;
Bidding the Law make Curteſie to their Will,
Looking both Right and Wrong to th' Appetite,
To follow as it draws. I'll to my Brother;
Tho' he hath fallen by Prompture of the Blood,
Yet hath he in him ſuch a Mind of Honour,
That had he twenty Heads to tender down
On twenty bloody Blocks, he'd yield them up.
Iſab. Ibid.

Life and Death.

Reaſon thus with Life;
If I do loſe thee, I do loſe a thing
That none but Fools would keep; a Breath thou art,
Servile to all the Skiey Influences;
That doſt this Habitation where thou keep'ſt
Hourly afflict: Meerly thou art Death's Fool;
For him thou labour'ſt by thy Flight to ſhun,
And yet run'ſt tow'rd him ſtill. Thou art not Noble;
For all th' Accommodations that thou bear'ſt,
Are nurs'd by Baſeneſs: Thou'rt by no means Valiant:
For thou doſt fear the ſoft and tender Fork
Of a poor Worm. Thy beſt of Reſt is Sleep,
And that thou oft provok'ſt, yet groſly fear'ſt
Thy Death, which is no more. Thou'rt not thy ſelf;
For thou exiſt'ſt on many a thouſand Grains
That iſſue out of Duſt. Happy thou art not;
For what thou haſt not, ſtill thou ſtriv'ſt to get,
And what thou haſt, forgett'ſt. Thou are not certain,
For thy Complexion ſhifts to ſtrange Effects,
After the Moon. If thou art rich, thour't poor;
For like an Aſs, whoſe Back with Ingots bows,
Thou bear'ſt thy heavy Riches but a Journey,
And Death unloadeth thee. Friend haſt thou none;
For thine own Bowels, which do call thee Sire,
The meer Effuſion of thy proper Loins,
Do curſe the *Gout*, *Serpego*, and the *Rheum*,
For ending thee no ſooner. Thou haſt nor Youth, nor Age;
But, as it were, an after-dinner's Sleep,
Dreaming on both; for all thy bleſſed Youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the Alms
Of palſied-Eld; and when thour't old, and rich,
Thou'ſt neither Heat, Affection, Limb, nor Beauty
To make thy Riches pleaſant. What's yet in this
That bears the Name of Life? Yet in this Life
Lie hid more thouſand Deaths; yet Death we fear,
That makes theſe Odds all Even. *Duke. Ibid.*

Death

Death.

Dar'ſt thou Die?
The Senſe of Death is moſt in Apprehenſion;
And the poor Beetle that we tread upon,
In corporal Suffering finds a Pang as great,
As when a Giant dies. *Iſab. Meaſure for Meaſure.*

On the ſame.

Aye, but to Die, and go we know not where.
To lye in cold Obſtruction, and to rot;
This ſenſible warm Motion, to become
A kneaded Clod; and the delighted Spirit
To bathe in fiery Floods, or to reſide
In thrilling Regions of thick-ribbed Ice,
To be impriſon'd in the view-leſs Winds,
And blown with reſtleſs Violence round about
The pendant World; or to be worſe than worſt
Of thoſe, that lawleſs and incertain Thought
Imagine howling; 'tis too horrible!
The wearieſt and moſt loathed worldly Life,
That Age, Ach, Penury or Impriſonment
Can lay on Nature, is a Paradiſe
To what we fear of Death. *Claud. Ibid.*

Virtue and Goodneſs.

Virtue is bold, and Goodneſs never fearful. *Duke. Ib.*

Calumny.

No Might nor Greatneſs in Mortality
Can Centure ſcape: Back-wounding Calumny
The whiteſt Virtue ſtrikes. What King ſo ſtrong
Can tie the Gall up in the ſlanderous Tongue? *Duke. Ib.*

Place and Greatneſs.

Oh Place and Greatneſs! Millions of falſe Eyes
Are ſtuck upon thee: Volumes of Report
Run with theſe falſe and moſt contrarious Queſts
Upon thy Doings: Thouſand Eſcapes of Wit
Make thee the Father of their idle Dreams,
And rack thee in their Fancies. *Duke. Ibid.*

Man's Preheminence.

There's nothing ſituate under Heav'n's Eye,
But hath its bound in Earth, in Sea, and Sky:
The Beaſts, the Fiſhes, and the winged Fowls,
Are their Male's Subjects, and at their Controuls:
Man more divine, the Maſter of all theſe,
Lord of the wide World, and wide watry Seas,
Indu'd with intellectual Senſe and Soul,
Of more Preheminence than Fiſh and Fowl
Are Maſters to their Females, and their Lords:
Then let your Will attend on their Accords. *Luciana*
Comedy of Errors

Jealouſy.

Aye, aye *Antipholis*, look ſtrange and frown;
Some other Miſtreſs hath ſome ſweet Aſpects.
I am not *Adriana*, nor thy Wife.
The time was once, when thou, unurg'd, wouldſt vow,
That never Words were Muſic to thine Ear,
That never Object pleaſing in thine Eye,
That never touch was welcome to thy Hand,
That never Meat ſweet-ſavour'd to thy Taſte,
Unleſs I ſpake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carv'd to thee.
Adriana. Ibid.

No Friendſhip in Love Affairs.

Friendſhip is conſtant in all other Things,
Save in the Office and Affairs of Love;
Therefore all Hearts in Love uſe their own Tongues,
Let every Eye negotiate for it ſelf,
And truſt no Agent; for Beauty is a Witch,
Againſt whoſe Charms, Faith melteth into Blood. *Claud.*
Much Ado about Nothing.

Counſel of no weight in Miſery.

Leonato. I pray thee ceaſe thy Counſel,
Which falls into mine Ears as profitleſs
As Water in a Sieve; give not me Counſel,
Nor let no Comfort elſe delight mine Ear,
But ſuch a one whoſe Wrongs doth ſuit with mine.
Bring me a Father that ſo lov'd his Child,
Whoſe Joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him ſpeak of Patience;
Meaſure his Woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it anſwer every Strain for Strain:
As thus for thus, and ſuch a Grief for ſuch,
In every Lineament, Branch, Shape and Form;
If ſuch a one will ſmile and ſtroke his Beard,
And halloo, wag, cry hem, when he ſhould groan,
Patch Grief with Proverbs, make Misfortune drunk,
With Candle-waſters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather Patience.
But there is no ſuch Man; for Brother, Men
Can counſel, and give Comfort to that Grief
Which they themſelves not feel; but taſting it,
Their Counſel turns to Paſſion, which before
Would give preceptial Medicine to Rage,
Fetter ſtrong Madneſs in a ſilken Thread,
Charm Ach with Air, and Agony with Words.
No, no, 'tis all Mens Office, to ſpeak Patience
To thoſe that wring under the Load of Sorrow;

But no Man's Virtue nor Sufficiency
To be ſo moral, when he ſhall endure
The like himſelf; therefore give me no Counſel,
My Griefs cry louder than Advertiſement.

Ant. Therein do Men from Children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee Peace; I will be Fleſh and Blood;
For there was never yet Philoſopher,
That could endure the Tooth-ach patiently;
However they have writ the Stile of Gods,
And made a piſh at Chance and Sufferance. *Ibid.*

VOL. II.

Vanity of Pleaſure.

Why? all Delights are vain, and that moſt vain,
Which, with Pain purchas'd, doth inherit Pain. *Biron.*
Love's Labour loſt.

Study.

Study is like the Heaven's glorious Sun,
That will not be deep ſearch'd with ſawcy Looks;
Small have continual Plodders ever won,
Save baſe Authority from other's Books. *Ibid.*

The Father's Reſentment againſt Love, without his Conſent.

Stand forth Demetrius. My noble Lord,
This Man hath my Conſent to marry her.
Stand forth Lyſander. And, my gracious Duke,
This hath bewitch'd the Boſom of my Child:
Thou, thou *Lyſander*, thou haſt given her Rhimes,
And interchang'd Love-tokens with my Child:
Thou haſt, by Moon-light, at her Window ſung,

With feigning Voice, Verſes of feigning Love,
And ſtoll'n th' Impreſſion of her Fantaſie,
With Bracelets of thy Hair, Rings, Gawds, Conceits;
Knacks, Trifles, Noſegays, Sweet-meats, Meſſengers
Of ſtrong Prevailment in unharden'd Youth:
With Cunning haſt thou filch'd my Daughter's Heart,
Turn'd her Obedience, which is due to me,
To ſtubborn Harſhneſs. *Egeus. A Midſummer's Night's Dream.*

The Authority of a Father.

To you your Father ſhould be as a God;
One that compos'd your Beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a Form in Wax
By him imprinted; and within his Power,
To leave the Figure, or disfigure it. *Theſeus. Ibid.*

A Nun.

Know of your Youth, examine well your Blood,
Whether, if you yield not to your Father's Choice,
You can endure the Livery of a Nun,
For Aye to be in ſhady Cloyſter mew'd,
To live a barren Siſter all your Life,
Chanting faint Hymns to the cold fruitleſs Moon.
Thrice bleſſed they that maſter ſo their Blood,
To undergo ſuch Maiden Pilgrimage.
But earlier happy is the Roſe diſtill'd,
Than that which withering on the Virgin Thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in ſingle Bleſſedneſs. *Theſ. Ib.*

The Fate of true Love.

The Courſe of true Love never did run ſmooth,
But either it was different in Blood——
Her. O croſs! too high to be enthrall'd to Love.
Lyſ. Or elſe miſgraffed, in reſpect of Years——
Her. O Spight! too old to be engag'd too young.

Lyſ. Or elſe it ſtood upon the choice of Merit ——
Her. O Hell! to chuſe Love by another's Eye.
Lyſ. Or if there were a Sympathy in Choice,
War, Death, or Sickneſs, did lay Siege to it;
Making it momentary as a Sound,
Swift as a Shadow, ſhort as any Dream,
Brief as the Lightning in the collied Night,
That in a Spleen unfolds both Heaven and Earth;
And ere a Man hath Power to ſay, Behold,
The Jaws of Darkneſs do devour it up;
So quick bright Things come to Confuſion. *Ibid.*

The Lovers Oaths of Conſtancy.

I ſwear to thee, by *Cupid*'s ſtrongeſt Bow,
By his beſt Arrow with the Golden Head,
By the Simplicity of *Venus* Doves,
By that which knitteth Souls, and proſpers Love,
And by that Fire which burn'd the *Carthage* Queen,
When the falſe *Trojan*, under Sail, was ſeen;
By all the Vows that ever Men have broke,
In number more than ever Women ſpoke,
In that ſame Place thou haſt appointed me,
To morrow truly will I meet with thee. *Hermia. Ib.*

Love.

Love can tranſpoſe to Form and Dignity:
Love looks not with the Eyes, but with the Mind,
And therefore is wing'd *Cupid* painted blind:
Nor hath Love's Mind of any Judgment taſte;
Wings and no Eyes, Figure unheedy Haſte.
And therefore is Love ſaid to be a Child,
Becauſe in Choice he often is beguil'd.
As waggiſh Boys themſelves in Game forſwear,
So the Boy Love is perjur'd every where.
For ere *Demetrius* look't on *Hermia*'s Eyne,
He hail'd down Oaths that he was only mine;

And

And when this Hail ſome Heat from *Hermia* felt,
So he diſſolv'd, and Showers of Oaths did melt. *Hel. Ib.*

Fairy Jealouſy, and the ill Effects of it.

Theſe are the Forgeries of Jealouſie,
And never ſince the middle Summer's Spring,
Met we on Hill, in Dale, Foreſt, or Mead,
By paved Fountain, or by ruſhy Brook,
Or in the beached Margent of the Sea,
To dance our Ringlets to the whiſtling Wind,
But with thy Brawls thou haſt diſturb'd our Sport.
Therefore the Winds piping to us in vain,
As in Revenge have ſuck'd up from the Sea
Contagious Fogs; which, falling on the Land,
Have every petty River made ſo proud,
That they have over-born their Continents.
The Ox hath therefore ſtretch'd his Yoak in vain.
The Ploughman loſt his Sweat, and the green Corn
Hath rotted, ere his Youth attain'd a Beard,
The Fold ſtands empty in the drowned Field,
And Crows are fatted with the Murrion Flock,
The Nine-mens-morris is fill'd up with Mud,
And the queint Mazes in the wanton Green,
For lack of tread are undiſtinguiſhable.
The human Mortals want their Winter here,
Now Night is with no Hymn or Carol bleſt;
Therefore the Moon, the Governeſs of Floods,
Pale in her Anger, waſhes all the Air;
That Rheumatick Diſeaſes do abound.
And thorough this Diſtemperature we ſee
The Seaſons alter; hoary-headed Froſts
Fall in the freſh Lap of the Crimſon Roſe,
And on old *Hyem*'s Chin and Icy Crown,
An odorous Chaplet of ſweet Summer Buds
Is as in Mockery ſet. The Spring, the Summer,
The childing Autumn, angry Winter change
Their wonted Liveries, and the amazed World,

By their increaſe, now knows not which is which;
And this ſame Progeny of Evil comes
From our Debate, from our Diſſention;
We are their Parents and Original. *Titania Qu. Ib.*

Lovers Preſence exclude Solitude.

Your Virtue is my Privilege; for that
It is not Night when I do ſee your Face,
Therefore I think I am not in the Night.
Nor doth this Wood lack Worlds of Company,
For you, in my Reſpect, are all the World.
Then how can it be ſaid I am alone,
When all the World is here to look on me? *Hel. Ibid.*

A Fairy Bower.

I know a Bank where on the wild Time blows,
Where the Oxſlips and nodding Violet grows,
Quite over cannopy'd with luſcious Woodbine,
With ſweet Musk Roſes, and with Eglantine,
There ſleeps *Titania*, ſome time of the Night,
Lull'd in theſe Flowers, with Dances and Delight. *Ober. Ibid.*

Similes.

For as a Surfeit of the ſweeteſt Things,
The deepeſt loathing to a Stomach brings;
Or as the Hereſies that Men do leave,
Are hated moſt of thoſe that did deceive. *Lyſ. Ibid.*

Night.

Dark Night, that from the Eye his Function takes,
The Ear more quick of Apprehenſion makes.
Wherein it doth impair the ſeeing Senſe,
It pays the Hearing double recompence. *Her. Ibid.*

The Force of Fancy.

Lovers and Madmen have ſuch ſeething Brains,
Such ſhaping Phantaſies, that apprehend more
Than cool Reaſon ever comprehends.
The Lunatick, the Lover, and the Poet,
Are of Imagination all compact:
One ſees more Devils than vaſt Hell can hold;
That is the Madman. The Lover, all as frantick,
Sees *Helen*'s Beauty in a Brow of *Egypt*.
The Poet's Eye in a fine Frenzy rowling,
Doth glance from Heav'n to Earth, from Earth to Heav'n:
And as Imagination bodies forth
The Forms of Things unknown; the Poet's Pen
Turns them to Shapes, and gives to Airy Nothing
A local Habitation, and a Name.
Such Tricks hath ſtrong Imagination,
That if he would but apprehend ſome Joy,
It comprehends ſome Bringer of that Joy:
Or in the Night imagining ſome Fear,
How eaſy is a Buſh ſuppos'd a Bear? *Hippolita. Ibid.*

Deſcription of Night by the Fairy.

Now the hungry Lion roars,
And the Wolf beholds the Moon:
Whilſt the heavy Ploughman ſnoars,
All with weary Task fore-done.
Now the waſted Brands do glow,
Whilſt the Scritch-Owl, ſcritching loud,
Puts the Wretch that lyes in Woe
In remembrance of a Shroud.
Now it is the time of Night,
That the Graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his Spright,
In the Church-way Paths to glide;

And we *Fairies*, that do run
By the triple *Hecate*'s Team,
From the Preſence of the Sun,
Following Darkneſs like a Dream. *Puck. Ibid.*

Imprudence of too much Care in the World.

You have too much Reſpect upon the World:
They loſe it that do buy it with much Care. *Gratiano. in the Merchant of Venice.*

The true Value of the World.

I hold the World but as the World, *Gratiano*,
A Stage where every Man muſt play his Part. *Antho. Ib.*

The Advantage of the Medium in Fortune.

And yet, for ought I ſee, they are as ſick that ſurfeit with too much, as they that ſtarve with nothing; therefore it is no ſmall Happineſs to be ſeated in the Mean; Superfluity comes ſooner by white Hairs, but Competency lives longer. *Neriſſa. Ibid.*

Eaſier to know than do.

If to do, were as eaſie as to know what were good to do, Chappels had been Churches, and poor Men's Cottages Princes Palaces: It is a good Divine that follows his own Inſtructions; I can eaſier teach twenty what were good to be done, than to be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The Brain may deviſe Laws for the Blood, but a hot Temper leaps over a cold Decree; ſuch a Hare is Madneſs in Youth, to skip o'er the Meſhes of good Counſel the Cripple. *Portia. Ibid.*

Not

Not to chuſe by Appearance.

That *Many* may be meant
By the fool Multitude that chuſe by Show,
Not learning more than the fond Eye doth teach,
Which pryes not to th' Interior; but like the Martlet
Builds in the Weather on the outward Wall,
Even in the Force and Road of Caſualty. *Prince of Arragon. Ib.*

Muſic.

And what is Muſic then? Then Muſic is
Even as the Flouriſh, when true Subjects bow
To a new crowned Monarch: Such it is
As are thoſe dulcet Sounds in break of Day,
That creep into the dreaming Bridegroom's Ear,
And ſummon him to Marriage. *Portia. Ibid.*

The Deceit of Ornament.

So may the outward Shows be leaſt themſelves.
The World is ſtill deceiv'd with Ornament.
In Law what Plea ſo tainted and corrupt,
But being ſeaſon'd with a gracious Voice,
Obſcures the Show of Evil? In Religion
What damned Error, but ſome ſober Brow
Will bleſs it, and approve it with a Text,
Hiding the Groſsneſs with fair Ornament?
There is no Vice ſo ſimple, but aſſumes
Some Mark of Virtue on his outward Parts;
How many Cowards, whoſe Hearts are all as falſe
As Stairs of Sand, wear yet upon their Chins
The Beards of *Hercules* and frowning *Mars*?
Who inward ſearcht, have Livers white as Milk,
And theſe aſſume but Valour's Excrement,
To render them redoubted. Look on Beauty,
And you ſhall ſee 'tis purchas'd by the Weight,

Which therein works a Miracle in Nature,
Making them lighteſt that wear moſt of it:
So are thoſe criſped ſnaky golden Locks,
Which make ſuch wanton Gambols with the Wind
Upon ſuppoſed Fairneſs, often known
To be the Dowry of a ſecond Head;
The Skull that bred them in the Sepulcher.
Thus Ornament is but the gilded Shore
To a moſt dangerous Sea; the beauteous Scarf
Veiling an *Indian* Beauty; in a Word,
The ſeeming Truth which cunning Times put on
To entrap the Wiſeſt. *Baſſanio. Ibid.*

Tranſport of Succeſs in Love.

How all the other Paſſions fleet to Air,
As doubtful Thoughts, and raſh embrac'd Deſpair,
And ſhuddring Fear, and green-ey'd Jealouſie? *Por. Ib.*

On an excellent Picture of a Lady.

Fair *Portia's* Counterfeit? What Demy-God
Hath come ſo near Creation? Move theſe Eyes?
Or whether riding on the Balls of mine
Seem they in Motion? Here are ſever'd Lips
Parted with Sugar Breath; ſo ſweet a Bar
Should ſunder ſuch ſweet Friends: Here in her Hairs
The Painter plays the Spider, and hath woven
A golden Meſh t'intrap the Hearts of Men
Faſter than Gnats in Cobwebs: But her Eyes,
How could he ſee to do them? Having made one,
Methinks it ſhould have Power to ſteal both his,
And leave it ſelf unfiniſh'd. *Baſſ. Ibid.*

An excellent Simile of Publick Applauſe.

Like one of two contending in a Prize,
That thinks he hath done well in Peoples Eyes;

Hearing

Hearing Applauſe and univerſal Shout,
Giddy in Spirit, ſtill gazing in a Doubt,
Whether thoſe Pearls of Praiſe be his or no;
So thrice fair Lady ſtand I even ſo,
As doubtful whether what I ſee be true,
Until confirm'd, ſign'd, ratify'd by you. *Baſſanio. Ib.*

Simile.

Only my Blood ſpeaks to you in my Veins,
And there is ſuch Confuſion in my Powers,
As after ſome Oration fairly ſpoke
By a beloved Prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleaſed Multitude,
Where every ſomething being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, ſave of Joy
Expreſt, and not expreſt. *Baſſ. Ibid.*

Mercy.

The Quality of Mercy is not ſtrain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle Rain from Heav'n
Upon the place beneath. It is twice bleſs'd,
It bleſſeth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis Mightieſt in the Mightieſt, it becomes
The throned Monarch better than his Crown:
His Scepter ſhews the force of temporal Power,
The Attribute to Awe and Majeſty,
Wherein doth ſit the Dread and Fear of Kings;
But Mercy is above this ſceptred Sway,
It is enthroned in the Hearts of Kings,
It is an Attribute to God himſelf;
And earthly Power doth then ſhew likeſt God's,
When Mercy ſeaſons Juſtice. *Por. Ibid.*

Muſic.

Muſic.

The Reaſon is, your Spirits are attentive;
For do but note a wild and wanton Herd,
Or Race of youthful and unhandled Colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot Condition of their Blood;
If they but hear perchance a Trumpet ſound,
Or any Air of Muſick touch their Ears,
You ſhall perceive them make a mutual ſtand;
Their ſavage Eyes turn'd to a modeſt Gaze
By the ſweet Power of Muſic. Therefore the Poet
Did fain that *Orpheus* drew Trees, Stones and Floods,
Since naught ſo ſtockiſh, hard, and full of Rage,
But Muſic for the time doth change his Nature:
The Man that hath no Muſic in himſelf,
Nor is not mov'd with Concord of ſweet Sounds,
Is fit for Treaſons, Stratagems, and Spoils;
The Motions of his Spirit are dull as Night,
And his Affections dark as *Erebus*.
Let no ſuch Man be truſted. *Lorenzo. Ibid.*

Muſic by Night.

The Crow doth ſing as ſweetly as the Lark,
When neither is attended; and I think
The Nightingale, if ſhe ſhould ſing by Day,
When every Gooſe is cackling, would be thought
No better a Muſician than the Wren.
How many things by Seaſon ſeaſon'd are
To their right Praiſe and true Perfection? *Por. Ibid.*

Beauty.

Beauty provoketh Thieves ſooner than Gold.
Roſalind. As you Like it.

For

For Solitude againſt Courts.

Now my Co-mates, and Brothers in Exile,
Hath not old Cuſtom made this Life more ſweet
Than that of painted Pomp? Are not theſe Woods
More free from Peril than the envious Court?
Here feel we not the Penalty of *Adam*,
The Seaſon's Difference, as the Icy Fang
And churliſh chiding of the Winter's Wind?
Which when it bites and blows upon my Body,
Even till I ſhrink with Cold, I ſmile, and ſay,
This is no Flattery: Theſe are Counſellors
That feelingly perſuade me what I am.
Sweet are the Uſes of Adverſity,
Which, like the Toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious Jewel in his Head:
And this our Life exempt from publick Haunt,
Finds Tongues in Trees, Books in the running Brooks,
Sermons in Stones, and Good in every thing. *Duke. Sen. Ib.*

The World's a Stage.

Duke Sen. Thou ſeeſt we are not all alone unhappy:
This wide and univerſal Theatre
Preſents more woful Pageants than the Scene
Wherein we play.
Jaq. All the World's a Stage,
And all the Men and Women meerly Players;
They have their *Exits* and their Entrances,
And one Man in his time plays many Parts:
His Acts being ſeven Ages. At firſt the Infant,
Mewling and puking in the Nurſe's Arms:
And then, the whining Schoolboy with his Satchel,
And ſhining Morning-face, creeping like Snail
Unwillingly to School. And then the Lover,
Sighing like Furnace, with a woful Ballad
Made to his Miſtreſs's Eye-brow. Then a Soldier,

Full

Full of ſtrange Oaths, and bearded like the Pard,
Jealous in Honour, ſudden and quick in Quarrel,
Seeking the Bubble Reputation,
Even in the Canon's Mouth. And then the Juſtice
In fair round Belly, with good Capon lin'd,
With Eyes ſevere, and Beard of formal cut,
Full of wiſe Saws, and modern Inſtances,
And ſo he plays his Part. The ſixth Age ſhifts
Into the lean and ſlipper'd Pantaloon,
With Spectacles on Noſe, and Pouch on ſide;
His youthful Hoſe well ſav'd, a world too wide
For his ſhrunk Shank, and his big manly Voice
Turning again toward childiſh trebble Pipes,
And whiſtles in his ſound. Laſt Scene of all,
That ends this ſtrange eventful Hiſtory,
Is ſecond Childiſhneſs, and meer Oblivion,
Sans Teeth, ſans Eyes, ſans Taſte, ſans every thing. *Ib.*

The Duty of the Wife to her Husband.

Fie, fie, unknit that threatning unkind Brow,
And dart not ſcornful Glances from thoſe Eyes,
To wound thy Lord, thy King, thy Governor.
It blots thy Beauty, as Froſts bite the Meads,
Confounds thy Fame, as Whirlwinds ſhake fair Buds,
And in no Senſe is meet or amiable.
A Woman mov'd is like a Fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill ſeeming, thick, bereft of Beauty;
And while it is ſo, none ſo dry or thirſty
Will dain to ſip, or touch a drop of it.
Thy Husband is thy Lord, thy Life, thy Keeper,
Thy Head, thy Soveraign; one that cares for thee
And for thy Maintenance; Commits his Body
To painful Labour, both by Sea and Land;
To watch the Night in Storms, the Day in Cold;
While thou ly'ſt warm at home, ſecure and ſafe,
And craves no other Tribute at thy Hands,
But Love, fair Looks, and true Obedience;

Too little Payment for ſo great a Debt.
Such Duty as the Subject owes the Prince,
Even ſuch, a Woman oweth to her Husband:
And when ſhe is froward, peeviſh, ſullen, ſower,
And not obedient to his honeſt Will;
What is ſhe but a foul contending Rebel,
And graceleſs Traitor to her loving Lord?
I am aſham'd that Women are ſo ſimple,
To offer War where they ſhould kneel for Peace;
Or ſeek for Rule, Supremacy, and Sway,
When they are bound to ſerve, love, and obey.
Why are our Bodies ſoft, and weak and ſmooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the World,
But that our ſoft Conditions, and our Hearts,
Should well agree with our external Parts?
Come, come, you're froward and unable Worms,
My Mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My Heart as great, my Reaſon haply more,
To bandy Word for Word, and Frown for Frown;
But now I ſee our Launces are but Straws,
Our Strength is weak, our Weakneſs paſt compare,
That ſeeming to be moſt, which we indeed leaſt are:
Then vale your Stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your Hands below your Husband's Foot:
In token of which Duty, if he pleaſe,
My Hand is ready, may it do him Eaſe. *Katherina. in the Taming of the Shrew.*

The Remedy of Evils generally in ourſelves.

Our Remedies oft in our ſelves do lye,
Which we aſcribe to Heav'n: The fated Sky
Gives us free Scope, only doth backward pull
Our ſlow Deſigns, when we our ſelves are dull. *Helena. in All's well that Ends well.*

Virtue the true Riſe of Dignity.

From loweſt place, whence virtuous things proceed,
The Place is dignify'd by th' Doer's Deed. Where

Where great Addition ſwells, and Virtue none,
It is a dropſied Honour; Good alone,
Is good without a Name. Vileneſs is ſo:
The Property by what it is, ſhould go,
Not by the Title. *King. Ibid.*

On the ſame.

She is young, wiſe, fair,
In theſe, to Nature ſhe's immediate Heir;
And theſe breed Honour: That is Honour's ſcorn,
Which challenges it ſelf as Honour's born,
And is not like the Sire. Honours beſt thrive,
When rather from our Acts we them derive
Than our Fore-goers: The meer Word's a Slave
Deboſh'd on every Tomb, on every Grave;
A lying Trophy, and as oft is dumb,
Where Duſt and damn'd Oblivion is the Tomb. *King. Ib.*

Self Accuſation of too much Love.

Poor Lord! is't I
That chaſe thee from thy Country, and expoſe
Thoſe tender Limbs of thine to the event
Of the none ſparing War? And is it I,
That drive thee from the ſportive Court, where thou
Waſt ſhot at with fair Eyes, to be the mark
Of ſmoaky Muſquets? O you leaden Meſſengers,
That ride upon the violent ſpeed of Fire,
Fly with falſe aim, move the ſtill piercing Air
That ſtings with piercing, do not touch my Lord:
Whoever ſhoots at him, I ſet him there.
Whoever charges on his forward Breaſt,
I am the Caitiff that do hold him to it,
And tho' I kill him not, I am the Cauſe
His Death was ſo effected. Better 'twere
I met the rav'ning Lion when he roar'd
With ſharp conſtraint of Hunger: Better 'twere

That

That all the Miſeries which Nature owes
Were mine at once. No, come thou home, *Roſſilion*,
Whence Honour but of danger wins a Scar,
As oft it loſes all. I will be gone:
My being here it is, that holds thee hence,
Shall I ſtay here to do't? No, no, although
The Air of Paradiſe did fan the Houſe,
And Angels offic'd all. *Hel. Ibid.*

VOL. III.

Love.

O Spirit of Love, how quick and freſh art thou!
That, notwithſtanding thy Capacity
Receiveth as the Sea, Nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch ſo e'er,
But falls into Abatement, and low Price,
Even in a Minute; ſo full of Shapes is Fancy,
That it alone is high fantaſtical. *Orſino. in the Twelfth-Night.*

On the ſame.

O ſhe that hath a Heart of that fine Frame,
To pay this Debt of Love but to a Brother,
How will ſhe love, when the rich golden Shaft
Hath kill'd the Flock of all Affections elſe
That live in her? When Liver, Brain and Heart,
Theſe Sovereign Thrones, are all ſupply'd, and fil'd
Her ſweet Perfections with one ſelf-ſame King. *Ibid.*

Danger.

I ſaw your Brother,
Moſt provident in Peril, bind himſelf,

Cou-

Courage and Hope both teaching him the Practice,
To a ſtrong Maſt that liv'd upon the Sea;
Where, like *Orion* on the Dolphin's Back,
I ſaw him hold Acquaintance with the Waves,
So long as I could ſee. *Capt. Ibid.*

Diſguiſe.

Diſguiſe, I ſee thou art a Wickedneſs,
Wherein the pregnant Enemy does much.
How eaſie is it, for the proper falſe
In Womens waxen Hearts to ſet their Forms!
Alas, our Frailty is the Cauſe, not we,
For ſuch as we are made, if ſuch we be. *Viola. Ibid.*

True Love.

Come hither, Boy; if ever thou ſhalt Love,
In the ſweet Pangs of it, remember me;
For ſuch as I am, all true Lovers are,
Unſtaid and skittiſh in all Motions elſe,
Save in the conſtant Image of the Creature
That is belov'd. *Duke. Ibid.*

In Love Woman ought to be youngeſt.

Duke. Too old, by Heav'n; let ſtill the Woman take
An elder than her ſelf, ſo wears ſhe to him;
So ſways ſhe level in her Husband's Heart.
For, Boy, however we do praiſe our ſelves,
Our Fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, ſooner loſt and worn,
Than Womens are.

Vio. I think it well, my Lord.

Duke. Then let thy Love be younger than thy ſelf,
Or thy Affection cannot hold thy bent:
For Women are as Roſes, whoſe fair Flower,
Being once diſplay'd, doth fall that very Hour. *Ibid.*

Man'

Man's Love.

There is no Woman's Sides
Can bide the beating of ſo ſtrong a Paſſion,
As Love doth give my Heart: No Woman's Heart
So big to hold ſo much; they lack Retention.
Alas, their Love may be call'd Appetite:
No motion of the Liver, but the Palate,
That ſuffers Surfeit, Cloyment and Revolt;
But mine is all as hungry as the Sea,
And can digeſt as much; make no compare
Between that Love a Woman can bear me,
And that I owe *Olivia*. *Duke. Ibid.*

Woman's Love.

Too well I know what Love Women to Men may owe,
In faith they are as true of Heart, as we.
My Father had a Daughter lov'd a Man
As it might be, perhaps, were I a Woman,
I ſhould your Lordſhip.
Duke. And What's her Hiſtory?
Vio. A blank, my Lord: She never told her Love,
But let Concealment, like a Worm i'th' Bud,
Feed on her damask Cheek: She pin'd in thought,
And with a green and yellow Melancholy,
She ſate like Patience on a Monument,
Smiling at Grief. Was not this Love indeed?
We Men may ſay more, ſwear more, but indeed
Our ſhews are more than will; for ſtill we prove
Much in our Vows, but little in our Love. *Ibid.*

Unſought Love.

Ceſario, by the Roſes of the Spring,
By Maid-hood, Honour, Truth, and every thing,
I love

I love thee ſo, that maugre all thy Pride,
Nor Wit, nor Reaſon can my Paſſion hide.
Do not extort thy Reaſons from this Clauſe,
For that I woe, thou therefore haſt no Cauſe:
But rather Reaſon thus with Reaſon fetter;
Love ſought, is good; but given unſought, is better.
Olivia. H

Art.

Per. For I have heard it ſaid,
There is an Art, which in their pideneſs ſhares
With great creating-Nature.
Pol. Say there be,
Yet Nature is made better by no Mean,
But Nature makes that Mean; ſo over that Art,
Which you ſay adds to Nature, is an Art
That Nature makes; you ſee, ſweet Maid, we marry
A gentler Scyon to the wildeſt Stock,
And make conceive a Bark of baſer kind
By Bud of Nobler Race. This is an Art
Which does mend Nature; Change it rather; but
The Art it ſelf is Nature. *The Winter's Tal*

England.

Together with that pale, that white-fac'd Shore,
Whoſe Foot ſpurns back the Ocean's roaring Tides,
And coops from other Lands her Iſlanders,
Even till that *England*, hedg'd in with the Main,
That water-walled Bulwark, ſtill ſecure
And confident from foreign Purpoſes. *Auſtria*
in the Life and Death of King John

Deſcription of an Engliſh *Army.*

His Marches are expedient to this Town,
His Forces ſtrong, his Soldiers confident.
With him along is come the Mother Queen;

An *Ate* ſtirring him to Blood and Strife,
With her Neice, the Lady *Blanch* of *Spain*;
With them a Baſtard of the King deceas'd,
And all th' unſettled Humours of the Land;
Raſh, inconſiderate, fiery Voluntaries,
With Ladies Faces, and fierce Dragons Spleens,
Have ſold their Fortunes at their native Homes,
Bearing their Birthright proudly on their Backs,
To make a Hazard of new Fortunes here;
In brief, a braver Choice of dauntleſs Spirits,
Than now the *Engliſh* Bottoms have waft o'er,
Did never float upon the ſwelling Tide. *Chat. Ib.*

Deſcription of a Battle.

Rejoyce, you Men of *Angiers*; ring your Bells;
King *John*, your King, and *England*'s, doth approach,
Commander of this hot malicious Day.
Their Armours, that march'd hence ſo Silver bright,
Hither return all gilt in *Frenchmens* Blood.
There ſtuck no Plume in any *Engliſh* Creſt,
That is remov'd by a Staff of *France*.
Our Colours do return in thoſe ſame Hands,
That did diſplay them when we firſt march'd forth;
And like a jolly Troop of Huntſmen come
Our luſty *Engliſh*, all with purpled Hands
Dy'd in the dying Slaughter of their Foes.
Open your Gates, and give the Victors Way. *E. Her. Ib.*

A Wife's Excellence.

If luſty Love ſhould go in queſt of Beauty,
Where ſhould he find it fairer, than in *Blanch*?
If zealous Love ſhould go in ſearch of Virtue,
Where ſhould he find it purer than in *Blanch*?
If Love ambitious, ſought a Match of Birth,
Whoſe Veins bound richer Blood than Lady *Blanch*?
Citizen. Ibid.

Inte-

Intereſt.

Rounded in the Ear
With that ſame Purpoſe-changer, that ſly Devil,
That Broker, that ſtill breaks the Pate of Faith,
That daily Break-Vow, he that wins of all,
Of Kings, of Beggars, old Men, young Men, Maids,
Who having no external thing to loſe,
But the Word Maid, cheats the poor Maid of that,
That ſmooth-fac'd Gentleman, tickling Commodity,
Commodity, the Biaſs of the World,
The World, who of it ſelf is poiſed well,
Made to run even, upon even Ground;
'Till this Advantage, this vile drawing Biaſs,
This ſway of Motion, this Commodity,
Makes it take head from all indifferency,
From all direction, purpoſe, courſe, intent;
And this ſame Biaſs, this Commodity,
This Bawd, this Broker, that all changing world,
Clapt on the outward Eye of fickle *France*,
Hath drawn him from his own determin'd aid,
From a reſolv'd and honourable War,
To a moſt baſe and vile concluded Peace.
And why rail I on this Commodity?
But for becauſe he hath not wooed me yet:
Not that I have the Power to clutch my Hand,
When his fair Angels would ſalute my Palm,
But for my Hand, as unattempted yet,
Like a poor-Beggar, raileth on the Rich. *Baſtard. In*

Uneaſy Life.

There's nothing in this World can make me joy:
Life is as tedious as a twice told Tale,
Vexing the dull Ear of a drowſie Man;
A bitter Shame hath ſpoil'd the ſweet Words taſte,
That it yields nought but Shame and Bitterneſs. *Lew. In.*

Fortune's

Fortune's Frown the beſt.

No, no; when Fortune means to Men moſt good,
She looks upon them with a threatning Eye.

Pand. Ibid.

Deſcription of State Murmurs.

Old Men and Beldams in the Streets
Do Propheſie upon it dangerouſly:
Young *Arthur*'s Death is common in their Mouths,
And when they talk of him, they ſhake their Heads,
And whiſper one another in the Ear.
And he that ſpeaks, doth gripe the Hearer's Wriſt,
Whilſt he that hears, makes fearful Action
With wrinkled Brows, with Nods, with rolling Eyes.
I ſaw a Smith ſtand with his Hammer, thus,
The whilſt his Iron did on th' Anvil cool,
With open Mouth ſwallowing a Taylor's News;
Who with his Shears and Meaſure in his Hand,
Standing on Slippers, which his nimble Haſte
Had falſly thruſt upon contrary Feet,
Told of a many thouſand warlike *French*,
That were embatteled, and rank'd in *Kent*.
Another lean, unwaſh'd Artificer,
Cuts off his Tale, and talks of *Arthur*'s Death.

Hubert. Ibid.

Madneſs.

K. John. I, marry, now my Soul hath Elbow-room,
It would not out at Windows, nor at Doors,
There is ſo hot a Summer in my Boſom,
That all my Bowels crumble up to Duſt:
I am a ſcribled Form drawn with a Pen
Upon a Parchment, and againſt this Fire
Do I ſhrink up.

Henry. How fares your Majesty?

K. *John.* Poison'd, ill Fare: Dead, forsook, cast off,
And none of you will bid the Winter come
To thrust his Icy Fingers in my Maw;
Nor let my Kingdoms Rivers take their course
Through my burn'd Bosom: Nor intreat the North
To make his bleak Winds kiss my parched Lips,
And comfort me with cold. *Ibid.*

England.

This *England* never did, nor never shall
Lye at the proud Foot of a Conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now, these her Princes are come home again,
Come the three Corners of the World in Arms,
And we shall shock them: Nought shall make us rue,
If *England* to itself do rest but true. *Bastard. Ibid.*

The Impotence of Mortal Power.

But not a Minute, King, that thou can'st give;
Shorten my Days thou can'st with sudden Sorrow,
And pluck Nights from me, but not lend a Morrow:
Thou canst help Time to furrow me with Age,
But stop no Wrinkle in his Pilgrimage:
Thy Word is current with him for my Death;
But dead, thy Kingdom cannot buy my Breath.
Gaunt. The Life and Death of Richard II.

Pain not to be cured by Maxims.

Oh who can hold a Fire in his Hand
By thinking on the frosty *Caucasus*?
Or cloy the hungry edge of Appetite
By bare Imagination of a Feast?
Or wallow naked in *December* Snow
By thinking on fantastick Summer's Heat?

Oh

Oh no, the Apprehenſion of the good
Gives but the greater feeling to the worſe;
Fell Sorrow's Tooth doth never rankle more
Than when it bites, but lanceth not the Sore.

Bullingbroke. Ibid.

Courting the People.

Obſerv'd his Courtſhip to the common People:
How he did ſeem to dive into their Hearts
With humble and familiar Courteſie?
What Reverence he did throw away on Slaves,
Wooing poor Crafts-men with the Craft of Souls,
And patient under-bearing of his Fortune,
As 'twere to baniſh their Affects with him?
Off goes his Bonnet to an Oyſter-wench,
A brace of Dray-men bid God ſpeed him well,
And had the Tribute of his ſupple Knee,
With Thanks, my Countrymen, my loving Friends;
As were our *England* in Reverſion his,
And he our Subjects next Degree in hope.

K. Rich. Ibid.

Violences ſhort.

His raſh fierce Blaze of Riot cannot laſt;
For violent Fires ſoon burn out themſelves.
Small Showers laſt long, but ſudden Storms are ſhort;
He tires betimes, that ſpurs too faſt betimes;
With eager feeding, Food doth choke the Feeder;
Light Vanity, inſatiate Cormorant,
Conſuming means, ſoon preys upon itſelf.

Gaunt. Ibid.

England.

This Royal Throne of Kings, this ſcepter'd Iſle,
This Earth of Majeſty, this Seat of *Mars*,
This other *Eden*, demy Paradiſe,
This Fortreſs built by Nature for herſelf,

Againſt Infection, and the Hand of War;
This happy Breed of Men, this little World,
This precious Stone ſet in the Silver Sea,
Which ſerves it in the Office of a Wall,
Or as a Moat defenſive to a Houſe,
Againſt the Envy of leſs happier Lands,
This bleſſed Plat, this Earth, this Realm, this *England*,
This Nurſe, this teeming Womb of Royal Kings,
Fear'd for their Breed, and famous for their Birth,
Renowned for their Deeds, as far from home,
For Chriſtian Service, and true Chivalry,
As is the Sepulchre in ſtubborn *Jury*
Of the World's Ranſom, bleſſed *Mary*'s Son;
This Land of ſuch dear Souls, this dear, dear Land,
Dear for her Reputation through the World,
Is now Leas'd out, I dye pronouncing it,
Like to a Tenement or pelting Farm;
England bound in with the triumphant Sea,
Whoſe rocky Shore beats back the envious Siege
Of watry *Neptune*, is now bound in with Shame,
With Inky Blots, and rotten Parchment Bonds.
That *England*, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a ſhameful Conqueſt of itſelf. *Gaunt. Ibid.*

Deſcription of a publick Entry.

York. Then, as I ſaid, the Duke, great *Bullingbroke*,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery Steed,
Which his aſpiring Rider ſeem'd to know,
With ſlow, but ſtately Pace, kept on his Courſe:
While all Tongues cry'd, God ſave thee, *Bullingbroke*.
You would have thought the very Windows ſpake,
So many greedy Looks of young and old,
Through Caſements darted their deſiring Eyes
Upon his Viſage; and that all the Walls
With painted Imagery had ſaid at once,
Jeſu preſerve thee, welcome *Bullingbroke*.
Whilſt he from one ſide to the other turning,

Bare-

Bare-headed, lower than his proud Steed's Neck,
Beſpoke them thus: I thank you, Countrymen;
And thus ſtill doing, thus he paſs'd along.
Dutch. Alas! poor *Richard*, where rides he the whilſt?
York. As in a Theatre, the Eyes of Men,
After a well-grac'd Actor leaves the Stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his Prattle to be tedious:
Even ſo, or with much more Contempt, Mens Eyes
Did ſcowle on *Richard*; no Man cry'd, God ſave him:
No joyful Tongue gave him his welcome home,
But Duſt was thrown upon his ſacred Head,
Which with ſuch gentle Sorrow he ſhook off,
His Face ſtill combating with Tears and Smiles,
The Badges of his Grief and Patience. *Ibid.*

Of Hope.

I will Deſpair, and be at Enmity
With cozening Hope; he is a Flatterer,
A Paraſite, a keeper back of Death,
Who gently would diſſolve the Bands of Life,
Which falſe Hopes linger in Extremity. *Queen. Ibid.*

VOL. IV.

The Vanity of popular Applauſe.

An Habitation giddy and unſure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar Heart.
O thou fond Many! with what loud Applauſe
Did'ſt thou beat Heav'n with bleſſing *Bullingbroke*,
Before he was, what thou would'ſt have him be?
And being now trim'd up in thine own Deſires,
Thou, beaſtly Feeder, art ſo full of him,
That thou provok'ſt thyſelf to caſt him up.

So, ſo, thou common Dog, didſt thou diſgorge
Thy Glutton-boſom of the Royal *Richard*,
And now thou would'ſt eat thy dead Vomit up,
And howl'ſt to find it.

York. Second Part of King Henry IV.

On Sleep.

How many thouſands of my pooreſt Subjects
Are at this Hour aſleep! O Sleep, O gentle Sleep,
Nature's ſoft Nurſe, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my Eye-lids down,
And ſteep my Senſes in Forgetfulneſs?
Why rather, Sleep, lyeſt thou in ſmoaky Cribs,
Upon uneaſie Pallads ſtretching thee,
And huſht with buzzing Night-Flies to thy ſlumber,
Than in the perfum'd Chambers of the Great,
Under the Canopies of coſtly State,
And lull'd with Sounds of ſweeteſt Melody?
O thou dull God, why ly'ſt thou with the vile,
In loathſom Beds, and leav'ſt the Kingly Couch
A Watch-caſe, or a common Larum-bell?
Wilt thou, upon the high and giddy Maſt,
Seal up the Ship-boy's Eyes, and rock his Brains
In Cradle of the rude imperious Surge,
And in the Viſitation of the Winds,
Who take the Ruffian Billows by the top,
Curling their monſtrous Heads, and hanging them
With deaf'ning Clamours in the ſlip'ry Clouds,
That with the Hurley, Death itſelf awakes?
Can'ſt thou, O partial Sleep, give thy Repoſe
To the wet Sea-boy in an Hour ſo rude?
And in the calmeſt and moſt ſtilleſt Night,
With all Appliances and Means to boot,
Deny it to a King? Then happy Low, lye down,
Uneaſie lies the Head that wears a Crown.

K. *Henry. Ibid.*

Rebellion.

Rebellion.

If that Rebellion
Came like itſelf, in baſe and abject Routs,
Led on by bloody Youth, guarded with Rage,
And countenanc'd by Boys and Beggary:
I ſay, if damn'd Commotion ſo appear
In his true, native, and moſt proper ſhape,
You, Reverend Father, and theſe Noble Lords,
Had not been here to dreſs the ugly Form
Of baſe and bloody Inſurrection
With your fair Honours. You, Lord Archbiſhop,
Whoſe See is by a Civil Peace maintain'd,
Whoſe Beard the Silver Hand of Peace hath touch'd,
Whoſe Learning and good Letters Peace hath tutor'd,
Whoſe white Inveſtments figure Innocence,
The Dove and very bleſſed Spirit of Peace;
Wherefore do you ſo ill tranſlate your ſelf
Out of the ſpeech of Peace, that bears ſuch Grace,
Into the harſh and boiſt'rous Tongue of War?
Turning your Books to Graves, your Ink to Blood,
Your Pens to Launces, and your Tongue divine
To a loud Trumpet, and a Point of War? *Weſt. Ib.*

Fortune.

Will Fortune never come with both hands full,
But write her fair words ſtill in fouleſt Letters?
She either gives a Stomach, and no Food,
Such are the Poor, in health; or elſe a Feaſt,
And takes away the Stomach; ſuch are the Rich,
That have abundance, and enjoy it not. *K. Henry. ib.*

On Royalty.

O poliſh'd Perturbation! Golden Care!
That keep'ſt the Ports of Slumber open wide

To many a watchful Night: Sleep with it now,
Yet not ſo ſound, and half ſo deeply ſweet,
As he whoſe Brow, with homely Biggen bound,
Snores out the Watch of Night. O Majeſty!
When thou doſt pinch thy Bearer, thou doſt ſit
Like a rich Armour, worn in heat of day,
That ſcald'ſt with ſafety. *P. Henry. Ibid.*

Gold.

How quickly Nature falls into revolt,
When Gold becomes her Object?
For this, the fooliſh over-careful Fathers
Have broke their Sleeps with Thought,
Their Brains with Care, their Bones with Induſtry.
For this, they have engroſs'd and piled up
The canker'd heaps of ſtrange-atchieved Gold:
For this they have been thoughtful to inveſt
Their Sons with Art, and Martial Exerciſes:
When, like the Bee, culling from every Flower
The virtuous Sweets, our Thighs packt with Wax,
Our Mouths with Honey, we bring it to the Hive;
And, like the Bees, are murthered for our Pains.
K. Hen. Ibid.

Different Degrees of Men.

Therefore doth Heav'n divide
The ſtate of Man in divers Functions,
Setting Endeavour in continual Motion:
To which is fixed, as an Aim or Butt,
Obedience; for ſo work the Honey Bees,
Creatures, that by a Rule in Nature, teach
The Act of Order to a peopled Kingdom.
They have a King, and Officers of ſorts,
Where ſome like Magiſtrates correct at home:
Others, like Merchants, venture Trade abroad:

Others,

Others, like Soldiers, armed in their Stings,
Make boot upon the Summer's Velvet Buds:
Which Pillage they with merry march bring home
To the Tent-Royal of their Emperor:
Who, buſied in his Majeſty, ſurveys
The ſinging Maſon building Roofs of Gold,
The civil Citizens kneading up the Honey;
The poor Mechanick Porters crowding in
Their heavy Burthens at his narrow Gate:
The ſad-ey'd Juſtice, with his ſurly hum,
Delivering o'er to Executors pale
The lazy yawning Drone. *Cant. Life of Henry V.*

England.

O *England!* Model to thy inward Greatneſs,
Like little Body with a mighty Heart;
What might'ſt thou do, that Honour would thee do,
Were all thy Children kind and natural:
But ſee thy Fault, *France* hath in thee found out
A neſt of hollow Boſoms, which he fills
With treacherous Crowns. *Chorus. Ibid.*

False Appearance.

Oh, how haſt thou with Jealouſy infected
The Sweetneſs of Affiance! Shew Men dutiful?
Why ſo didſt thou. Seem they Grave and Learned?
Why ſo didſt thou. Come they of Noble Family?
Why ſo didſt thou. Seem they Religious?
Why ſo didſt thou. Or are they ſpare in Diet,
Free from groſs Paſſion, or of Mirth, or Anger,
Conſtant in Spirit, nor ſwerving with the Blood,
Garniſh'd and deck'd in modeſt Complement,
Not working with the Eye, without the Ear,
And but in purged Judgment truſting neither?
Such, and ſo finely boulted didſt thou ſeem:
And thus thy Fall hath left a kind of blot,

To make thee full fraught Man, the beſt endued
With ſome Suſpicion, I will weep for thee. *K. Henry. Ibid.*

A King but a Man.

I think the King is but a Man, as I am: The Violet ſmells to him, as it doth to me; the Element ſhews to him, as it doth to me; all his Senſes have but humane Conditions. His Ceremonies laid by, in his Nakedneſs he appears but a Man; and tho' his Affections are higher mounted than ours, yet when they ſtoop, they ſtoop with the like Wing. *K. Henry. Ibid.*

Miſery of Royalty.

O hard Condition, twin-born with Greatneſs,
Subject to the Breath of every Fool, whoſe Senſe
No more can feel, but his own wringing.
What infinite heart-eaſe muſt Kings neglect,
That private Men enjoy?
And what have Kings that Privates have not too,
Save Ceremony, ſave general Ceremony?
And what art thou, thou Idol Ceremony?
What kind of God art thou, that ſuffer'ſt more
Of mortal Griefs than do thy Worſhippers?
What are thy Rents? What are thy comings in?
O Ceremony, ſhew me but thy worth:
What! is thy Soul of Adoration?
Art thou ought elſe but Place, Degree, and Form,
Creating Awe and Fear in other Men?
Wherein thou art leſs happy, being fear'd,
Than they in fearing.
What drink'ſt thou oft, inſtead of Homage ſweet,
But poiſon'd Flattery? O be ſick, great Greatneſs,
And bid thy Ceremony give thee Cure.
Think'ſt thou the fiery Feaver will go out
With Titles blown from Adulation?

Will

Will it give place to flexure and low bending?
Can'ſt thou, when thou command'ſt the Beggar's Knee,
Command the Health of it? No, thou proud Dream,
Thou play'ſt ſo ſubtilly with a King's Repoſe,
I am a King that find thee; and I know,
'Tis not the Balm, the Scepter, and the Ball,
The Sword, the Mace, the Crown Imperial,
The inter-tiſſued Robe of Gold and Pearl,
The farſed Title running 'fore the King,
The Throne he ſits on; nor the Tide of Pomp,
That beats upon the high Shore of this World;
No, not all theſe thrice gorgeous Ceremonies,
Not all theſe, laid in Bed Majeſtical,
Can ſleep ſo ſoundly as the wretched Slave:
Who, with a Body fill'd, and vacant Mind,
Gets him to reſt, cram'd with diſtreſsful Bread,
Never ſees horrid Night, the Child of Hell:
But like a Lacquey, from the Riſe to Set,
Sweats in the Eye of *Phœbus*; and all Night
Sleeps in *Elyſium*; next day after dawn,
Doth riſe and help *Hyperion* to his Horſe,
And follows ſo the ever-running Year
With profitable Labour to his Grave:
And, but for Ceremony, ſuch a Wretch,
Winding up Days with Toil, and Nights with Sleep,
Had the fore-hand and vantage of a King.
The Slave, a Member of the Country's Peace,
Enjoys it; but in groſs Brain little wots,
What Watch the King keeps to maintain the Peace;
Whoſe Hours the Peaſant beſt advantages. *K. Henry. IV.*

Deſcription of a Deſperate Army.

Why do you ſtay ſo long, my Lords of *France*?
Yon Iſland Carrions, deſperate of their Bones,
Ill-favour'dly become the Morning Field:
Their ragged Curtains poorly are let looſe,
And our Air ſhakes them paſſing ſcornfully.

Big *Mars* ſeems bankrupt in their beggar'd Hoſt,
And faintly through a ruſty Bever peeps.
The Horſemen ſit like fixed Candleſticks,
With Torch-ſtaves in their Hand; and their poorer Jades
Lob down their Heads, drooping the Hide and Hips;
The Gum down roping from their pale-dead Eyes,
And in their pale dull Mouths the Jymold Bit
Lyes foul with chaw'd Graſs, ſtill and motionleſs;
And their Executors, the knaviſh Crows,
Fly o'er them, all impatient for their Hour.
Deſcription cannot ſuit itſelf in Words,
To demonſtrate the Life of ſuch a Battel,
In Life ſo lifeleſs as it ſhews it ſelf. *Grandpree. Ibid.*

On War.

O War! thou Son of Hell,
Whom angry Heav'ns do make their Miniſter,
Throw in the frozen Boſoms of our Part
Hot Coals of Vengeance. Let no Soldiers flie.
He that is truly dedicate to War
Hath no ſelf-love; nor he that loves himſelf,
Hath not eſſentially, but by Circumſtance,
The Name of Valour. *Clifford. Second Part of K. Hen. VI.*

On Mob.

Look, as I blow this Feather from my Face,
And as the Air blows it to me again,
Obeying with my Wind when I do blow,
And yielding to another when it blows,
Commanded always by the greater Guſt;
Such is the Lightneſs of you Common Men.
Third Part of K. Henry VI. Ibid.

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On the momentary Grace and Favour of Men.

O momentary Grace of mortal Men,
Which we more hunt for, than the Grace of God!
Who builds his Hope in Air of your good Looks,
Lives like a drunken Sailor on a Maſt,
Ready with every Nod to tumble down
Into the fatal Bowels of the Deep. *Haſtings. Life of K. Rich. III.*

On Words in Grief.

Windy Attorneys to their Client's Woes,
Airy Succeeders of inteſtine Joys,
Poor breathing Orators of Miſeries,
Let them have ſcope, tho' what they will impart
Help nothing elſe, yet they do eaſe the Heart. *Queen. Ib.*

Againſt Conſcience.

For Conſcience is a word that Cowards uſe,
Devis'd at firſt to keep the Strong in awe;
Our ſtrong Arms be our Conſcience, Swords our Law.
K. Richard. Ibid.

On Faſhions.

New Cuſtoms,
Though they be never ſo ridiculous,
Nay let 'em be unmanly, yet are follow'd. *Sands. Life of K. Hen. VIII.*

The State of Man.

This is the State of Man; to day he puts forth
The tender Leaves of Hopes, to morrow Bloſſoms,
And bears his bluſhing Honours thick upon him:
The third day comes a Froſt, a killing Froſt,
And when he thinks, good eaſie Man, full ſurely
His Greatneſs is a ripening, nips his Root,
And then he falls, as I do. *Wolſey. Ibid. Ambition.*

Ambition.

Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away Ambition:
By that Sin fell the Angels; how can Man then,
The Image of his Maker, hope to win it?
Love thy ſelf laſt, cheriſh thoſe Hearts that hate thee:
Corruption wins not more than Honeſty.
Still in thy Right-Hand carry gentle Peace
To ſilence envious Tongues. Be juſt, and fear not.
Let all the Ends thou aim'ſt at, be thy Country's,
Thy God's and Truth's; then if thou fall'ſt, O *Cromwel*,
Thou fall'ſt a bleſſed Martyr. *Wol. Ibid.*

Pride cures Pride.

Pride hath no other Glaſs
To ſhew itſelf, but Pride; for ſupple Knees
Feed Arrogance, and are the proud Man's Fees.
Ulyſſes. Troilus and Creſſida.

Fallen Greatneſs.

'Tis certain, Greatneſs once fall'n out with Fortune,
Muſt fall out with Men too: what the declin'd is,
He ſhall as ſoon read in the Eyes of others,
As feel in his own Fall. *Achilles. Ibid.*

Great Actions forgot, unleſs continued.

Ulyſ. Time hath, my Lord, a Wallet at his Back,
Wherein he puts Alms for Oblivion:
A great-ſiz'd Monſter of Ingratitude's;
Thoſe ſcraps are good Deeds paſt.
Which are devour'd as faſt as they are made,
Forgot as ſoon as done: Perſeverance, dear my Lord,
Keeps Honour bright: To have done, is to hang
Quite out of faſhion, like a ruſty Male

In monumental Mock'ry: Take the inſtant way,
For Honour travels in a Streight ſo narrow,
VVhere one but goes abreaſt; keep then the Path,
For Emulation hath a thouſand Sons,
That one by one purſue; if you give way,
Or hedge aſide from the direct forth-right,
Like to an entred Tide, they all ruſh by,
And leave you hindmoſt;
Or like a gallant Horſe fall'n in firſt Rank,
Lye there for Pavement to the abject, near
O'er-run and trampled on: Then what they do in preſent,
Tho' leſs than yours in paſt, muſt o'er-top yours;
For Time is like a faſhionable Hoſt,
That ſlightly ſhakes his parting Gueſt by th' hand;
And with Arms out-ſtretch'd, as he would fly,
Graſps in the Comer; the VVelcome ever ſmiles,
And Farewel goes out ſighing: O let not Virtue ſeek
Remuneration for the thing it was; for Beauty, VVit,
High Birth, Vigour of Bone, Deſert in Service,
Love, Friendſhip, Charity, are Subjects all
To envious and calumniating Time:
One touch of Nature makes the whole World Kin;
That all with one Conſent praiſe new-born Gauds,
Tho' they are made and mould'ed of things paſt,
And go to Duſt, that is, a little gilt;
More Laud than Gilt o'er-duſted,
The preſent Eye praiſes the preſent Object. *Ulyſſ. Ibid.*

Honour ill founded upon the People.

He that depends
Upon your Favours, ſwims with Sins of Lead,
And hews down Oaks with Ruſhes. Hang ye---truſt ye!
With every Minute you do change a Mind,
And call him Noble, that was now your Hate,
Him Vile, that was your Garland. *Martius, Coriolanus.*

Againſt

Againſt Cuſtom.

Cuſtom calls me to't ——
What Cuſtom wills in all Things, ſhould we do't?
Coriolanus. Ibid.

On the Turns of the World.

Oh World, thy ſlippery Turns! Friends now faſt ſworn,
Whoſe double Boſoms ſeem to wear one Heart,
Whoſe Hours, whoſe Bed, whoſe Meal and Exerciſe,
Are ſtill together; who twine (as 'twere) in Love
Unſeparable, ſhall within this hour,
On a Diſſention of a Doit, break out
To bittereſt Enmity. So felleſt Foes,
Whoſe Paſſions and whoſe Plots have broke their Sleep
To take the one the other, by ſome Chance,
Some Trick not worth an Egg, ſhall grow dear Friends,
And inter-join their Iſſues. *Cor. Ibid.*

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Love.

Love is a Smoke made of the Fume of Sighs,
Being purg'd, a Fire ſparkling in Lovers Eyes;
Being vex'd, a Sea nouriſh'd with loving Tears;
What is it elſe? A Madneſs moſt diſcreet,
A choaking Gall, and a preſerving Sweet.
Rom. Romeo and Juliet.

Of Dreams.

True, I talk of Dreams;
Which are the Children of an idle Brain,
Begot of nothing but vain Phantaſie,
Which is as thin of Subſtance as the Air,

And

And more unconſtant than the Wind; who woes
Even now the frozen Boſom of the North,
And being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his ſide to the Dew-dropping South. *Mer. Ib.*

Beauty.

Her Beauty hangs upon the Cheek of Night,
Like a rich Jewel in an *Æthiop*'s Ear:
Beauty too rich for uſe, for Earth too dear!
So ſhews a ſnowy Dove trooping with Crows,
As yonder Lady o'er her Fellows ſhows. *Rom. Ib.*

Deſcription of an Apothecary's Shop.

I do remember an Apothecary,
And hereabouts he dwells, which late I noted
In tatter'd Weeds, with overwhelming Brows,
Culling of Simples; meager were his Looks,
Sharp Miſery had worn him to the Bones:
And in his needy Shop a Tortoiſe hung,
An Alligator ſtuft, and other Skins
Of ill-ſhap'd Fiſhes, and about his Shelves
A beggarly Account of empty Boxes;
Green earthen Pots, Bladders, and muſty Seeds,
Remnants of Packthread, and old Cakes of Roſes,
Were thinly ſcatter'd, to make up a Shew. *Ibid.*

Againſt violent Delights.

Theſe violent Delights have violent Ends,
And in their Triumph die like Fire and Powder,
Which as they kiſs, conſume. The ſweeteſt Honey
Is loathſome in its own Deliciouſneſs,
And in the Taſte confounds the Appetite. *Friar. Ibid.*

On Ceremony or Complements.

Ceremony was but devis'd at firſt
To ſet a Gloſs on faint Deeds, hollow Welcomes,
Recanting Goodneſs, ſorry ere 'tis ſhown:
But where there is true Friendſhip, there needs none.

Timon. In Timon of Athens.

The Glory of this Life.

Like Madneſs is the Glory of this Life,
As this Pomp ſhews to a little Oyl and Root.
We make our ſelves Fools, to diſport our ſelves,
And ſpend our Flatteries, to drink thoſe Men,
Upon whoſe Age we void it up again,
With poiſonous Spight and Envy.
Who lives, that's not depraved, or depraves?
Who dies, that bears not one ſpurn to their Graves
Of their Friends Gift?

Alcibiades. ibid.

Curſes of Rage.

Let me look back upon thee, O thou Wall,
That girdleſt in thoſe Wolves, dive in the Earth,
And fence not *Athens*. Matrons, turn incontinent;
Obedience fail in Children; Slaves and Fools
Pluck the grave wrinkled Senate from the Bench,
And miniſter in their ſtead to general Filths.
Convert o' th' inſtant green Virginity,
Do't in your Parents Eyes. Bankrupts, hold faſt,
Rather than render back; out with your Knives,
And cut your Truſters Throats. Bound Servants, ſteal;
Large-handed Robbers your grave Maſters are,
And Pill by Law. Maid, to thy Maſter's Bed;
Thy Miſtreſs is o' th' Brothel. Son of ſixteen,
Pluck the lin'd Crutch from thy old limping Sire,
With it beat out his Brains. Piety and Fear,

Religion

Religion to the Gods, Peace, Juſtice, Truth,
Domeſtick Awe, Night-reſt, and Neighbourhood,
Inſtruction, Manners, Myſteries and Trades,
Degrees, Obſervances, Cuſtoms and Laws,
Decline to your confounding Contraries.
And yet Confuſion live: Plagues incident to Man,
Your potent and infectious Fevers heap
On *Athens*, ripe for Stroke. Thou cold *Sciatica*,
Cripple our Senators, that their Limbs may halt
As lamely as their Manners. Luſt and Liberty
Creep in the Minds and Marrows of our Youth,
That 'gainſt the Stream of Virtue they may ſtrive,
And drown themſelves in Riot. Itches, Blains,
Sow all the *Athenian* Boſoms, and their Crop
Be general Leproſie: Breath infect Breath,
That their Society (as their Friendſhip) may
Be meerly Poiſon. Nothing I'll bear from thee,
But Nakedneſs, thou deteſtable Town. *Tim. Ib.*

Gold.

Thus much of this, will make
Black, White; Foul, Fair; Wrong, Right;
Baſe, Noble; Old, Young; Coward, Valiant.
Ha, you Gods! why this? what this, you Gods? why, this
Will lug your Prieſts and Servants from your Sides;
Pluck ſtout Mens Pillows from below their Heads.
This yellow Slave
Will knit and break Religions, bleſs the accurs'd,
Make the hoar Leproſie ador'd, place Thieves,
And give them Title, Knee, and Approbation
With Senators on the Bench: This is it
That makes the wappen'd Widow wed again;
She, whom the Spittle-Houſe, and ulcerous Sores,
Would caſt the gorge at: this embalms and ſpices
To th' *April* day again. *Tim. Ibid.*

Gold.

What a God's Gold, that he is worſhipt
In a baſer Temple, than where Swine feed?
'Tis thou that rig'ſt the Bark, and plow'ſt the Foam,
Setleſt admir'd Reverence in a Slave;
To thee be worſhip, and thy Saints for aye
Be crown'd with Plagues, that thee alone obey.
Timon. Ib.

Of Lowlineſs, or Humility.

But 'tis a common Proof,
That Lowlineſs is young Ambition's Ladder,
Whereto the Climber upward turns his Face;
But when he once attains the upmoſt Round,
He then unto the Ladder turns his Back,
Looks in the Clouds, ſcorning the baſe Degrees
By which he did aſcend. *Brutus. In Julius Caſar.*

On Conſpiracy.

O Conſpiracy!
Sham'ſt thou to ſhew thy dang'rous Brow by Night,
When Evils are moſt free? O then, by Day
Where wilt thou find a Cavern dark enough,
To maſk thy monſtrous Viſage? Seek none, Conſpiracy,
Hide it in Smiles and Affability:
For if thou path thy native Semblance on,
Not *Erebus* it ſelf were dim enough,
To hide thee from Prevention. *Brutus. Ib.*

Sleep.

Methought I heard a Voice cry, ſleep no more;
Macbeth doth murther ſleep, the innocent ſleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd Sleeve of Care,
The Death of each Day's Life, ſore Labour's Bath,
Balm of hurt Minds, great Nature's ſecond Courſe,
Chief Nouriſher in Life's Feaſt. *Macbeth*
Life.

Life.

Life's but a walking Shadow, a poor Player,
That ſtruts and frets his Hour upon the Stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a Tale
Told by an Ideot, full of Sound and Fury
Signifying nothing. *Macbeth.*

Virtue and Luſt.

But Virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Tho' Lewdneſs court it in a ſhape of Heav'n;
So Luſt, tho' to a radiant Angel link'd,
Will ſate it ſelf in a Celeſtial Bed, and prey on Garbage.
Ghoſt. Hamlet Prince of Denmark.

On Man.

What a Piece of Work is Man! how noble in Reaſon! how infinite in Faculty! in Form and Moving, how expreſs and admirable! in Action, how like an Angel! in Apprehenſion, how like a God! the Beauty of the World, the Paragon of Animals; and yet to me, what is this Quinteſſence of Duſt? Man delights not me.
Hamlet. Ibid.

On Players and Plays.

I have heard, that guilty Creatures ſitting at a Play,
Have, by the very Cunning of the Scene,
Been ſtruck unto the Soul, that preſently
They have proclaim'd their Malefactions. *Ham. Ibid.*

Death, or to Die.

To be, or not to be, that is the Queſtion:
Whether, 'tis nobler in the Mind, to ſuffer
The Slings and Arrows of outragious Fortune,

Or

Or to take Arms againſt a Sea of Troubles,
And by oppoſing, end them. To dye, to ſleep
No more; and by a ſleep, to ſay we end
The Heart-ach, and the thouſand natural Shocks
That Fleſh is Heir to; 'tis a Conſummation
Devoutly to be wiſh'd. To dye to ſleep——
To ſleep, perchance to dream; ay, there's the Rub——
For in that Sleep of Death, what Dreams may come,
When we have ſhuffled off this mortal Coil,
Muſt give us Pauſe. There's the Reſpect
That makes Calamity of ſo long Life:
For who would bear the Whips and Scorns of Time,
The Oppreſſor's Wrong, the Poor Man's Contumely,
The Pangs of deſpis'd Love, the Law's Delay,
The Inſolence of Office, and the Spurns
That patient Merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himſelf might his *Quietus* make
With a bare Bodkin? Who would Fardles bear
To grunt and ſweat under a weary Life,
But that the Dread of ſomething after Death,
The undiſcover'd Country, from whoſe Borne
No Traveller returns, puzzles the Will,
And makes us rather bear thoſe Ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of? *Ham. Ib.*

Calumny.

Be thou as chaſte as Ice, as pure as Snow, thou ſhalt not eſcape Calumny. *Ham. Ib.*

On Man.

What is a Man,
If his chief Good and Market of his Time
Be but to ſleep and feed? A Beaſt, no more;
Sure he that made us with ſuch large Diſcourſe,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That Capability and God-like Reaſon
To ruſt in us unus'd. *Ham. Ibid.*

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The needs of Life few.

O reaſon not the need: Our baſeſt Beggars
Are in the pooreſt thing ſuperfluous;
Allow not Nature more than Nature needs,
Man's Life is cheap as Beaſts. Thou art a Lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why Nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'ſt,
Which ſcarcely keeps thee warm. *Lear. in King Lear.*

Tempeſtuous Night.

Things that love Night,
Love not ſuch Nights as theſe: the wrathful Skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their Caves: Since I was Man,
Such ſheets of fire, ſuch burſts of horrid Thunder,
Such groans of roaring Wind, and Rain, I never
Remember to have heard. Man's Nature cannot carry
Th' Affliction, not the Fear. *Kent. Ibid.*

On Man.

Is Man no more than this? Conſider him well. Thou
ow'ſt the Worm no Silk, the Beaſt no Hide, the Sheep
o Wool, the Cat no Perfume. Ha! Here's three on's
re ſophiſticated. Thou art the thing it ſelf; unaccommo-
ated Man is no more but ſuch a poor, bare, forked
nimal as thou art. *Lear. Ibid.*

De

Deſcription of Dover Cliff.

How fearful
And dizzy 'tis to caſt one's Eyes ſo low!
The Crows and Choughs, that wing the midway Air,
Shew ſcarce ſo groſs as Beetles. Half way down
Hangs one that gathers Samphire; dreadful Trade!
Methinks he ſeems no bigger than his Head.
The Fiſher-men that walk upon the Beach
Appear like Mice; and yon tall Anchoring Bark
Diminiſh'd to her Cock; her Cock, a Buoy
Almoſt too ſmall for ſight. The murmuring Surge,
That on th'unnumber'd idle Pebble chafes,
Cannot be heard ſo high. I'll look no more,
Leſt my Brain turn, and the deficient Sight
Topple down headlong. *Edgar. Ibid.*

Preferment.

'Tis the Curſe of Service;
Preferment goes by Letter, and Affection,
And not by old Gradation, where each ſecond
Stood Heir to th' firſt. *Iago. Othello Moor of Venice.*

Content in Riches.

Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough;
But Riches fineleſs, is as poor as Winter,
To him that ever fears he ſhall be poor. *Iago. Ibid.*

Barge.

Eno. The Barge ſhe ſat in, like a burniſh'd Throne
Burnt on the Water; the Poop was beaten Gold,
Purple the Sails, and ſo perfumed, that
The Winds were Love-ſick.
With them the Oars were Silver,

Which to the Tune of Flutes kept ſtroke, and made
The Water, which they beat, to follow faſter,
As amorous of their Strokes. For her own Perſon,
It beggar'd all Deſcription; ſhe did lye
In her Pavillion, Cloth of Gold, of Tiſſue,
O'er picturing that *Venus*, where we ſee
The Fancy out-work Nature. On each ſide her
Stood pretty dimpled Boys, like ſmiling *Cupids*,
With divers-colour'd Fans, whoſe Wind did ſeem
To glow the delicate Cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid, did.

Agrippa. Oh rare for *Antony.*

Enobarbus. Her Gentlewomen, like the *Nereides*,
So many Mermaids tended her i' th' Eyes,
And made their bends adornings. At the Helm,
A ſeeming Mermaid ſteers; the ſilken Tackles
Swell with the Touches of thoſe flower-ſoft Hands,
That yearly frame the Office. From the Barge
A ſtrange inviſible Perfume hits the Senſe
Of the adjacent Wharfs. The City caſt
Her People out upon her; and *Antony*,
Enthron'd i' th' Market-place, did ſit alone,
Whiſtling to th' Air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on *Cleopatra* too,
And made a Gap in Nature. *Antony and Cleopatra.*

Fortune forms our Judgments.

I ſee Mens Judgments are
A Parcel of their Fortunes, and Things outward
Do draw the inward Quality after them
To ſuffer all alike. *Eno. Ibid.*

Loyalty.

Mine Honeſty, and I, begin to ſquare;
The Loyalty well held to Fools, does make
Our Faith meer Folly; yet he that can endure
To follow with Allegiance a fall'n Lord,

Do's conquer him that did his Maſter conquer,
And earns a Place i' th' Story. *Eno. Ibid.*

On Gold.

'Tis Gold
Which buys Admittance, oft it doth, yea, and makes
Diana's Rangers falſe themſelves, and yield up
Their Deer to th' Stand of the Stealer. And 'tis Gold
Which makes the True Man kill'd, and ſaves the Thief;
Nay, ſometimes hangs both Thief and True-Man; What
Can it not do, and undo? *Cymbeline. Cloten.*

Slander.

No, 'tis Slander,
Whoſe Edge is ſharper than the Sword, whoſe Tongue
Out-venoms all the Worms of *Nile*, whoſe Breath
Rides on the poſting Winds, and doth belye
All Corners of the World. Kings, Queens, and States,
Maids, Matrons, nay the Secrets of the Grave,
This viperous Slander enters. *Piſanio. Ibid.*

Melancholy.

Oh Melancholy!
Who ever yet could ſound thy Bottom? Find
The Ooze, to ſhew what Coaſt thy ſluggiſh Care
Might eaſilieſt harbour in! Thou bleſſed Thing,
Jove knows what Man thou might'ſt have made; but ah!
Thou dy'dſt, a moſt rare Boy, of Melancholy.
Bellarius. Ibid.

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